the weekly Standard

NATURAL BORN LAWYERS
J. BUDZISZEWSKI

A Chump on the Stump

Donald Trump Pretends to Run for President BY MATT LABASH

DECEMBER 20, 1999 • $3.95

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Log Cabin Blues
BY TUCKER CARLSON

McCarthy and His Historians
BY ROBERT D. NOVAK

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Even the best laid retirement plans need protection.

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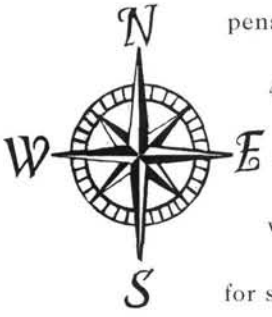

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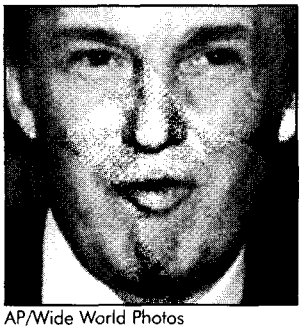

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And Now, a Fax from the Forbes Campaign!

Too bad for Steve Forbes that presidential campaigns don't rise or fall according to the number of ludicrous press releases faxed: He would have an insurmountable lead by now. Indeed, on Dec. 9, THE SCRAPBOOK's fax machine could hardly keep up with the whir of publicity from the Forbes campaign. Among the major releases of the day was this, proof that Forbes researchers have been burning the midnight oil:

> FORBES CHALLENGES BUSH TO RESCIND TEXAS LAW NAMING HIGHWAY AFTER ABORTIONIST: According to the *Houston Chronicle* (February 7, 1999), Mr. Bush became the "first governor ever to name a public site after an abortionist" when he signed a law naming the Harris County portion of Texas 35 in honor of John B. Coleman in May 1997. "Coleman, who died in 1994, had been a long-time target of anti-abortion protesters because he had run an abortion clinic." . . . Mr. Forbes made the following remarks: "Is George W. Bush committed to the pro-life movement, or not? Is he committed to naming a pro-life running mate? Is he committed to naming pro-life judges? He has, after all, named a highway after an abortionist."

(The highway, it turns out, was renamed for the late Mr. Coleman, a major supporter of the United Negro College Fund, by the state legislature, one of whose members is Coleman's son.)

As if that were not enough to undermine support for Bush among New Hampshire conservatives, another Forbes release "from the trail" came out of the fax machine only 5 minutes later: "BUSH DONOR AND RESPECTED GUN SHOP OWNER JUMPS TO FORBES." Stimulated by the headline, THE SCRAPBOOK eagerly perused the text, an account of a campaign event in Hooksett, N.H.:

> Forbes . . . said he has not used a firearm since he did some skeet shooting as a child. "Obviously, I wasn't good enough to make the Olympic team, but I enjoyed it," Forbes joked. The Republican candidate . . . told supporters at Riley's Sport Shop that he favors enforcing existing gun control laws rather than passing new regulations. Ralph Demmico, who co-owns the gun shop, said he donated money to Texas Gov. George W. Bush's campaign but now favors Forbes because "he was the only candidate that took the initiative to find out the concerns of the firearms community."

Now if Forbes would only show the same concern for the fax-receiving community. ♦

Love Canal Al

The Gore campaign must have been relieved last week when the latest "Internet Al" gaffe failed to gain traction. According to the initial *New York Times* account, Gore had claimed credit for discovering one of the key environmental disaster stories of the 1970s, the dump leaking toxic waste under a school and subdivision in Love Canal, N.Y. But the Gore campaign quickly responded that the *Times* had misheard their candidate. And indeed, last Friday the *Times* published the following correction: "An article on Dec. 1 about a campaign appearance by Vice President Al Gore in New Hampshire rendered a passage incorrectly in a comment he made about the contamination of Love Canal. Mr. Gore said: 'I found a little place in upstate New York called Love Canal. I had the first hearing on that issue and Toone, Tenn. But that was the one that started it all.' He did not say 'But I was the one that started it all.'"

Gee. So that isn't bragging? Gore had in fact chaired a hearing on the matter in October 1978, but that was after the state of New York declared Love Canal a health hazard and after President Carter declared it a national disaster and after over 250 families were already being evacuated. Indeed, following the *Times*'s story, Gore was quick to give "credit to Lois Gibbs and her neighbors for raising Cain."

But there's another interesting story here besides Al Gore's well-documented propensity to brag: Namely, why would Gore—why would anyone?—still want to take "credit" for discovering Love Canal? The truth is that the Love Canal toxic-waste evacuation was a scandalous example of mass hysteria, fed by governmental malpractice. And this has been known by anyone who cares to know for almost two decades.

The only party to the Love Canal scandal that consistently showed concern for the dangers of toxic waste was the Hooker Chemicals and Plastics Corporation, which had safely sealed away and buried chemical waste in Love Canal in the 1950s, in compliance with the law. As a thoroughgoing 1981 investigation by *Reason* magazine showed, Hooker was forced to deed the land it had used as a dump to the Niagara Falls Board of Education, all the while imploring the city never to disturb the site.

Despite Hooker's letters and statements at public hearings to that effect, the Board of Education decided to develop the land for a school. The city of Niagara Falls then further endan-

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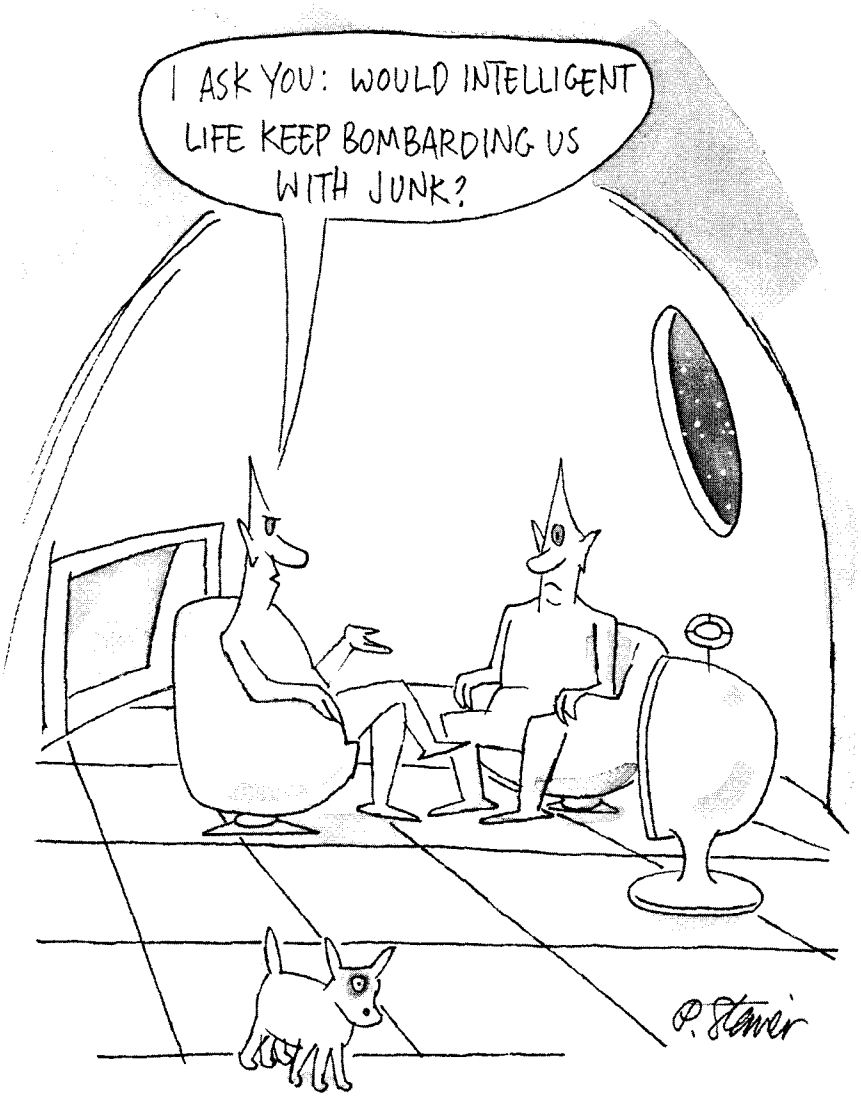

gered its residents by building a new sewer system that pierced the underground chemical fill. None of these facts discouraged Lois Gibbs, spokesperson for nearby residents, from laying the blame squarely at Hooker's feet. And the anti-corporate screeching continues even today. "Communities at risk," Gibbs wrote in the *Boston Globe* last year, "believe their neighborhoods were targeted, chosen deliberately by corporations to be sacrificed in the name of economic growth and profits."

So apparently does Gore. Love Canal is the last thing he should want to take credit for. ♦

The Style of the Times

Dan Seligman notes in his monthly *New York Post* column that the new style manual of the *New York Times* seems to spell the end of one of the *Times*'s favorite phrases for slamming Ronald Reagan, "voodoo economics" (which was actually coined by George Bush in 1980). THE SCRAPBOOK counts at least 250 uses of the phrase by the *Times* over the years. Perhaps you have already guessed that the reason for its demise has nothing to do with a new fondness for Reagan at the *Times*. No, here is what the stylebook has to say: "VOODOO is a religion with many followers in Africa and the West Indies, not to mention the United States. They are offended by disparaging uses of *voodoo* to mean irrational beliefs."

Seligman goes on to highlight other absurdities, for instance: "*Times* writers must not identify women as housewives or homemakers, as this would be 'belittling'—even, it appears, if true. But 15 lines below this regulation, we encounter another no-no: a news story telling us that some famous person's father was a steelworker, but failing to mention the mother's situation in life. . . . What if the mother was a housewife? The manual naturally doesn't say. It's voodoo rule-making." ♦

Everett Carll Ladd, 1937-1999

The distinguished political scientist Everett Carll Ladd, an occasional contributor to THE WEEKLY STANDARD, died last week. Professor emeritus at the University of Connecticut and head of the Roper Center for Public Opinion Research there, Ladd was the author or editor of more than 20 books on American political thought, electoral politics, and public opinion. His most recent book, *The Ladd Report*, is a definitive account of America's civic life. Everett Carll Ladd was a scholar and a gentleman. ♦

Oops

Correction of the week, from the *Guardian* (London): "In a letter, page 25, December 4, about a fashion spread in the Style pages of G2 the previous day, the author lamented the decision to show 'whey-faced bony childwomen in dressing-up frocks whose bodices are tragically empty and dimpled.' This appeared as 'bonny childwomen . . . whose bodies are tragically empty.' Apologies to the letter writer." ♦

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Casual

Spending Christmas

What fades in memory is not the fact, but the feeling. I can call up every detail of those Christmases of my childhood. A cold sparrow peering out across the lawn from under the snow-covered lilac hedge, while I sat at the window, waiting for my parents to wake. My father cocking his head to the side to concentrate on cutting out the sections of a grapefruit for breakfast. The heft of the Swiss Army knife from Uncle Howard, smuggled in the pocket of my dress pants to church. The steam rising while we washed the endless Christmas dishes, until the fog formed into little rivulets that raced each other down the kitchen window panes. The ink-and-paper new-book smell of Kipling's *Jungle Books*, read with a flashlight under the blankets after my mother had come in to shut off the lights and whisper one last Merry Christmas.

I can call up every detail—except the emotion, the overwhelming waves that beat upon my sisters and me down the long stream of days in the Christmas season. To dwell on those memories is more to remember that I did have a certain feeling than to recapture just how that feeling really felt. They come faded like last year's pine needles that fall from the box of Christmas ornaments when you bring it down from the linen closet. Why should I remember the long-needled ponderosa tree we had when I was 6? The heavy-scented balsam tree, bending under the weight of the ornaments, when I was 8? The Douglas firs, the Black Hills pines, the juniper? The scalloped holly sprigs set on the sideboard and mantel, with a stern warning every year not to eat the berries? The silly-looking plastic mistletoe my mother would hang, giggling with my father over some joke they wouldn't explain to the children?

A children's toy catalogue came in the mail the other day—or rather, an adults' toy catalogue, filled with the opportunity for grown-ups to buy at outrageous prices the toys of their childhood: Sting Ray bicycles with banana seats, slinkies, pogo sticks, cap guns, and the kind of open-springed, bouncing nursery horses no liability-conscious manufacturer would dare offer children anymore. Just hearing the names of those desperately hoped-for toys is like listening to an ancient, half-forgotten litany of secularized Christmas. Tinker Toys, Erector sets, and Lincoln Logs. Creepy Crawlers, Flexible Flyers, Raggedy Ann, and Raggedy Andy. They have the rhythm of plainchant, paeans lifted up to Santa Claus.

It's the buying of presents, rather than the receiving, that remains my strongest memory. There was the simultaneous feeling of titanic generosity and utter miserliness, love measured to the penny.

But it's the buying of presents, rather than the receiving, that remains my strongest memory. There was the simultaneous feeling of titanic generosity and utter miserliness, an endless calculation of love measured to the penny, and an irrecoverable sensation—the proud knowledge that one has, in a rage of magnanimity, squandered every cent, matched with the shameful awareness of just how paltry the result looks. If I spent the extra $1.43 to buy my older sister the metal stands instead of the plastic to hold her dolls, it was at the well-understood cost of getting the plastic tea set instead of the china for my younger sister. If I bought the Irish handkerchiefs for my grandfather, it was at the heartbreaking expense of the potholders for my mother. Very little in my life has ever been judged as carefully; and yet, even now, I'm not convinced that I shouldn't have gone with the taffy for Aunt Helen and saved the money the chocolates cost to buy my grandmother the larger size of glass ornament.

When I was 8, I decided that what my 9-year-old sister really needed was the savings bank I found on the discount counter of a junk store, carved from a coconut shell in the shape of a beatnik monkey, complete with beret, sunglasses, and bongo drums. But then, five blocks from home, Scooter North's mother pulled over to offer me a ride. And it was while I was struggling to hold my packages, thank Mrs. North, and climb inside that I slammed the car door on the monkey and cracked it down the middle. The grief was so sudden and precise, the desire not to let Scooter's mother see me cry so strong, the look on my face, reflected in the window of her Buick, so perfectly preserved, that I can almost relive that sorrow just by remembering it.

And the next year as well, I was almost in tears as I walked home, listening to the dry snow crunch beneath the black rubber overshoes my father made us wear, and with nothing but a Christmas card to give my mother after the store where I'd planned to get her genuine rhinestone earrings closed earlier than I expected on Christmas Eve. But while I was trudging past the almost deserted Christmas-tree shop in the school parking lot, a salesman suddenly leaned over the fence to ask if I wanted a wreath. "I don't have enough money left," I said. "That's okay, kid," he answered. "We're closing up here. Give it to your mother. It's Christmas."

J. Bottum

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"Let me give you the secrets of FEARLESS CONVERSATION!"

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by Leil Lowndes

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A Review to Ignore

Andrew Ferguson sets a new standard for bias and superficiality in his shallow "review" of George W. Bush's autobiography *A Charge to Keep* ("George W. Bush, Author," Dec. 6). I place "review" in quotes because Ferguson cavalierly dismisses the 253 pages of the book's text, deeming his interpretation of Bush's smile in a picture as revealing far more about him than the book's words. The picture shows Bush, then part-owner of the Texas Rangers, in a front-row seat as he talks with pitcher Nolan Ryan.

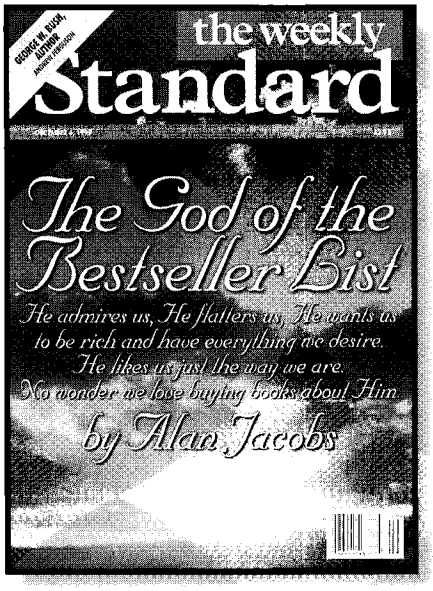
Why was Bush smiling? My humble, non-pundit interpretation is that he was simply happy to have the best pitcher in baseball on his team. But the omniscient pundit Ferguson declares that "the picture says" the following: "He has the look of a man to whom life has dealt an inside straight: handsome, wealthy, with a pretty and intelligent wife, a pair of charming daughters, a lucrative and not terribly taxing job that allows ample time for lunch, working the phones, snapping towels with the fellas in the locker room after a morning run—a man who has arrived where he is by a series of happy accidents, and who, but for the happiest accident of them all, his birth, would have been quite content to stay there."

Whew! That's some smile! In the same picture, a woman sitting a few rows behind Bush is also smiling. Using the Ferguson omniscient mind-meld technique, I interpret that she was thinking the following: "There's George W. Bush. I hope he runs for governor and does well enough to earn voters' trust and reelection. Then, in case a president disgraces his office, a brown-nosing vice president terms such a poltroon 'one of our greatest presidents,' and both compromise national security in exchange for illegal campaign contributions from China, Bush can run on his record and restore integrity to the White House. He seems such a compassionate conservative." Pre-Ferguson, I would've thought her smile just reflected joy at being at the ballpark on a sunny day. Since he absurdly stated that the picture of Bush revealed more than the autobiography's text, I didn't bother reading the rest of his "review."

James J. Hogan
Silver Spring, MD

Billary's Hypocrisy

The juxtaposition of two items in the Scrapbook of your Dec. 6 issue exposed yet another example of Clinton administration doublespeak. One item ("The President and His Marbles") revealed the controversy created when President Clinton, during a visit to Athens, expressed, unsolicited, his opinion that the Elgin Marbles should be returned to Greece. According to The Scrapbook, the president's spokesmen told reporters that the president's views on this matter should be considered irrelevant to the dispute between Greece and the United Kingdom because they were merely views that the president holds



"privately."

This was followed by another item ("Great Moments in Clintonian Diplomacy") referring to the controversy the first lady recently caused during her visit to Israel. In that case, Mrs. Clinton *failed* to express (promptly) her opinion with regard to the slanderous comments made by Suha Arafat. Of course, the explanation Mrs. Clinton gave was that she could not immediately express the outrage that she surely (?) felt because, as first lady, she represents the U.S. government and could not risk damaging U.S.-Palestinian relations.

Yet within a few days we are told that the president is free to express "privately" held views, and that these should be considered irrelevant to our relations with other countries. It is a strange situation when the president of the United States can be treated as though he "doesn't necessarily speak for the United States" while the president's wife, who holds no elected or appointed position in the U.S. government, is said to be severely constrained in her public statements because anything she says might be taken as reflecting the official position of the United States. Surely if the president can express "privately" held opinions that are offensive to the British government, the president's wife can express "privately" held opinions that are offensive to the Palestinian authorities. That is assuming, of course, that the first lady actually has a privately held opinion that Palestinian slanders against the Israeli government are despicable. It is still difficult to tell whether any such sentiment actually resides in the mind of Mrs. Clinton.

Stan Watson
Helena, AL

K.C. Masterpiece

Kudos to Jack Cashill for reporting in fascinating and entertaining detail why federal judges make lousy education czars ("Free at Last in Kansas City," Dec. 6).

One can hope that, with control returned to their hands after 22 years, "the people of Kansas City" indeed can do better by their children. But if that means handing the schools back to the same old education establishment that watched inequities fester to the point of federal takeover, the prospects are not bright.

Parental choice can bring about true freedom in Kansas City, and with it will come those elusive gains in pupil achievement and parental satisfaction. Researchers of diverse political stripes are finding in cities like Milwaukee, Cleveland, and San Antonio that choice works not just for choosers but for those who remain in public schools, which come under competitive pressure to shape up. The time is propitious for Kansas Citians to throw off the remaining shackles that impede education progress.

Robert Holland
Arlington, VA

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the weekly Standard

Mindlessness About Homelessness

Paris Drake is quite a piece of work. His criminal career started when he was 14, and he has been arrested 22 times in the intervening 18 years. Drake, a New York native who has no fixed address, has served time for drug-dealing, assault, weapons possession, larceny, and burglary. His prison sentences have ranged from a day to four years, and each time he was released he picked up where he left off. Then, on November 16, he became enraged because he couldn't raise enough money to buy crack. So he picked up a six-pound paving stone and hurled it at the back of Nicole Barrett's head. Barrett is a young office worker who just happened to be walking by. She suffered terrible head injuries and almost died.

The attack reminded New Yorkers that for all the amazing progress that has been made in bringing order to the city, there are still a lot of evil, dangerous people around. Mayor Rudolph Giuliani responded with measures to assert some authority over the hardest of the hardcore homeless. He proposed that street vagrants who refuse offers of shelter and violate the law should be issued summonses or arrested. He also announced that able-bodied homeless people who could work in exchange for their benefits should be asked to do so.

All hell broke loose. Rev. Al Sharpton rounded up the usual suspects for street protests. Hillary Clinton went to the New York Theological Seminary and blasted Giuliani's policies. She said they violated the Christmas spirit, which celebrates "the birth of a homeless child." She implied that Giuliani was driven merely by polls and said, "Criminalizing the homeless with mass arrests for those whose only offense is that they have no home is wrong." Mrs. Clinton promised that if elected senator, she will instead work to triple the value of new housing vouchers. Last Wednesday, Judge Elliot Wilk, a longtime activist judge on homeless matters, temporarily halted the mayor's plans.

The whole episode serves as a depressing reminder of how tough it is to change a political culture. Giuliani has spent the past six years trying to restore public authority in New York. His efforts have produced obvious and remarkable improvements. You would think that some of his enemies would have been moved to rethink their policy views. Instead, they have worked ever more aggressively over the past year to topple Giuliani and roll back his programs. The Al Sharptons of the world still equate orderly streets with racism. Hillary Clinton tries to breathe new life into the liberal orthodoxies of the mid-seventies, as if homelessness were a failure of capitalism to provide cheap housing and not a consequence of the bungled deinstitutionalization of the mentally ill. Some minds are permanently closed.

Let's be clear about the true state of play in New York. The city has some of the most generous social provisions for the homeless in the country. It devotes $850 million a year to homeless services. New York is the only city in the country that by law must offer shelter to every homeless person who requests it. No one is turned away.

The problem is that many of the hardcore homeless do not want shelter. These are not just unfortunate individuals down on their luck. They are not families cast out of housing because of economic crisis. Disproportionately, they are mentally ill, often schizophrenic. Most have some serious addiction. Most lead horrific lives. They are beaten and robbed, and occasionally beat and rob in turn. Hillary Clinton may have some romanticized image of the homeless as Mary, Joseph, and baby Jesus, but this has nothing to do with the reality of homelessness as it is experienced by people who don't ride in motorcades.

The city of New York and private groups have undertaken noble and high-minded efforts to try to coax these people into shelters, where they can be given medication and treated. The Times Square Business Improvement District (BID) procured over $2.5 million in state and federal money to hire teams of social service professionals to roam the streets, trying to persuade vagrants to visit the new "respite center." Over the first year of the program, BID spent $700,000 and managed to persuade all of *two* people to accept housing. To its credit, BID hired a journalism professor to write up a candid report on the effort, which was in turn picked up by Heather Mac Donald in the *City Journal.* (If there were any justice in the world, Mac Donald would be knee-deep in Pulitzer Prizes and National Magazine Awards for her pioneering work on homelessness and other urban issues.)

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The report describes the non-threatening approach adopted by the BID social workers. One day the workers came across a large cardboard box on the sidewalk across the street from the *New York Times* building, with a dirty hand sticking out. They noticed the hand was moving, so figuring the body attached to it must be okay, they moved on. They came across a man known as Shoeshine Bill with swollen ankles sitting in a puddle of his own urine. He assured them he was doing fine so they moved on. A young couple was lying on the street, the woman in the advanced stages of alcoholism. They declined to go to the shelter, though the man joked they'd be willing to go for an hour if they could get a private room with a bed. Another vagrant, known as Heavy, barricaded himself behind some mail carts when he saw the social workers coming.

Many of these people are not capable of thinking in their own long-term self-interest. In the short term, they see little need to go to places where they can get treatment, because activist groups bring food and clothing straight to their boxes—a delivery service that keeps the homeless untreated and fresh in the minds of the public.

The Giuliani administration says it is time to impose the sort of tough-love approach to the hardcore homeless that seems to be producing positive results as part of welfare reform. That means prodding the homeless to take responsibility for themselves, whenever possible, by working for their benefits. It also means building on serious efforts, undertaken in dozens of cities nationwide, to get the homeless off the streets. Mrs. Clinton talks of mass arrests for the crime of lacking shelter, but that is sheer demagoguery. Since Giuliani ordered New York police to intensify their efforts to rein in homelessness, the cops have had contact with 1,674 homeless people. Of those, 380 were taken to a shelter, 67 were taken to a hospital for physical or mental treatment. Only 164 were arrested, often because there were prior warrants out for their arrest. The fact is, the Giuliani policy does distinguish between the many different sorts of people who are homeless. Compared with Mrs. Clinton's crude attacks, his policy is a model of nuanced sophistication.

Over the past 20 years, city after city, run by Democrats and Republicans, has tried to reassert public order. Mayors have argued that the liberty of the homeless doesn't necessarily trump the interests of the community. Nobody has a right to defecate in doorways, intimidate pedestrians, and menace store owners. In this new era, an attempt is being made to balance liberty and license with civility and order.

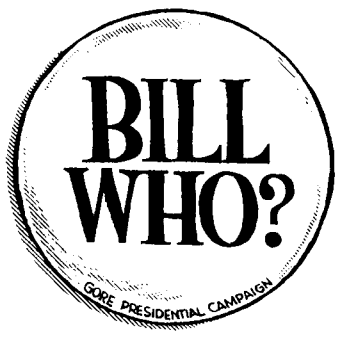
But as with most political struggles, there is never a conclusion. The liberationists sense they are gaining strength. They sense that the voters in New York now take the gains of the past decade for granted and are weary of Rudy Giuliani's aggressive style. They sense an opportunity to return to the old policy regime, and they may be right. If they are, there will be more Paris Drakes out on the streets, and more Nicole Barretts in the hospitals.

—David Brooks, for the Editors

1984

1988

1996



2000

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Reagan, McCain, and Sam McGee

The unlikely revival of Robert Service, poet of the presidents. BY ANDREW FERGUSON

THE GAME OF "GOTCHA," as we practitioners of gotcha journalism call our craft (we call it a "craft" too), is getting way out of hand, people now tend to agree. The turn in the road seems to have come with George W. Bush's famous interview several weeks ago with Andy Hiller, a "television journalist" (as they call themselves) from a TV station in Boston. As the world knows, Hiller asked Bush to name a number of international personages—the premier of Absurdistan, the president of Fredonia—and predictably enough the governor, having spent most of his political life in Texas, failed to fetch their identities from a memory bank already choked with the names of the Atascosa county commissioners, the fire marshal in Nocogdoches, and the deputy finance director of Jim Hogg county.

It is of course a cheap trick, this gotcha stuff, an exercise in smugness and condescension to which there is, by definition, no acceptable retort. Bush discovered this when he tried to disarm Hiller in mid-gotcha. Hiller asked him to name the new prime minister of India.

"The new prime minister of India is—no," Bush said. "Can you name the foreign minister of Mexico?"

"No, sir," Hiller replied. "But I would say I'm not running for president and I don't write foreign policy."

Upon hearing this weaselly dodge, which is perfectly in keeping with the spirit of gotcha, Bush should have switched fields, to Hiller's own area of expertise. "You're in television," Bush might have said. "Who played the professor on *Gilligan's Island*?" But this is hindsight. And besides, beating a gotcha journalist at his own game never makes any difference. The game remains in play.

Even for John McCain. As a former POW and bona fide hero, McCain is generally inoculated against the journalistic heel-snapping that bedevils other presidential candidates. But two weekends ago, as he was campaigning across New Hampshire, a team of comics with a camera crew from the cable network Comedy Central clambered aboard his campaign bus to enlist him in their own little game of gotcha.

The Comedy Central team was ignorant of the ironclad rule of modern poetry: Anyone who likes Robert Service can recite Robert Service.

Who's your favorite poet? they asked McCain.

According to the cosmology of the sophisticates at Comedy Central, politicians are not supposed to have favorite poets.

McCain hesitated, and then said, "Robert Service, I guess."

Okay, the comedians pressed as the cameras rolled, then recite some of his poetry.

Gotcha? Here again, the Comedy Central team revealed their own provincialism. They were apparently ignorant of one of the ironclad rules of modern poetry: Anyone who likes Robert Service can recite Robert Service. By the yard.

And that's what McCain did. After a bumpy push-off, by one witness's account, he ran through all 14 stanzas of "The Cremation of Sam McGee," Service's great ballad that deathlessly begins

> *There are strange things done in the midnight sun*
> *By the men who moil for gold;*
> *The Arctic trails have their secret tales*
> *That would make your blood run cold . . .*

Service is best known for his narrative poems set in gold rush-era Yukon, where the poet himself lived for many years at the turn of the century. "Sam McGee," like his other great ballad, "The Shooting of Dan McGrew," is a celebration of men in extremity, leavened by a black-humor joke at the end. With their marchbeat rhythms and simple rhyme schemes, his poems were written to be memorized and recited, and as a result Service was second only to Kipling as the poet of choice for at least two generations of American boys.

In his autobiography, Ronald Reagan recalls discovering a book of Service poems during his boyhood. "I reread 'The Shooting of Dan McGrew' so many times that years later, on the occasional nights when I had trouble falling asleep [Reagan? Insomnia?], I'd remember every word and recite it silently to myself until I bore myself into slumber. If I still couldn't sleep, I'd switch to 'The Cremation of Sam McGee,' and that usually did it."

Manly, sentimental, easily digestible, Service might be considered a poet of the Reaganite school—not the most crowded school in the world of poetry. Reagan was noted among his friends for his tendency to let fly with Service at odd moments. In his book he describes a state dinner with the Queen Mother on one side of him and Pierre Trudeau, the insufferable pseud who served interminably as premier of Canada, on the other. Trudeau said he'd heard that

Andrew Ferguson is a senior editor of THE WEEKLY STANDARD.

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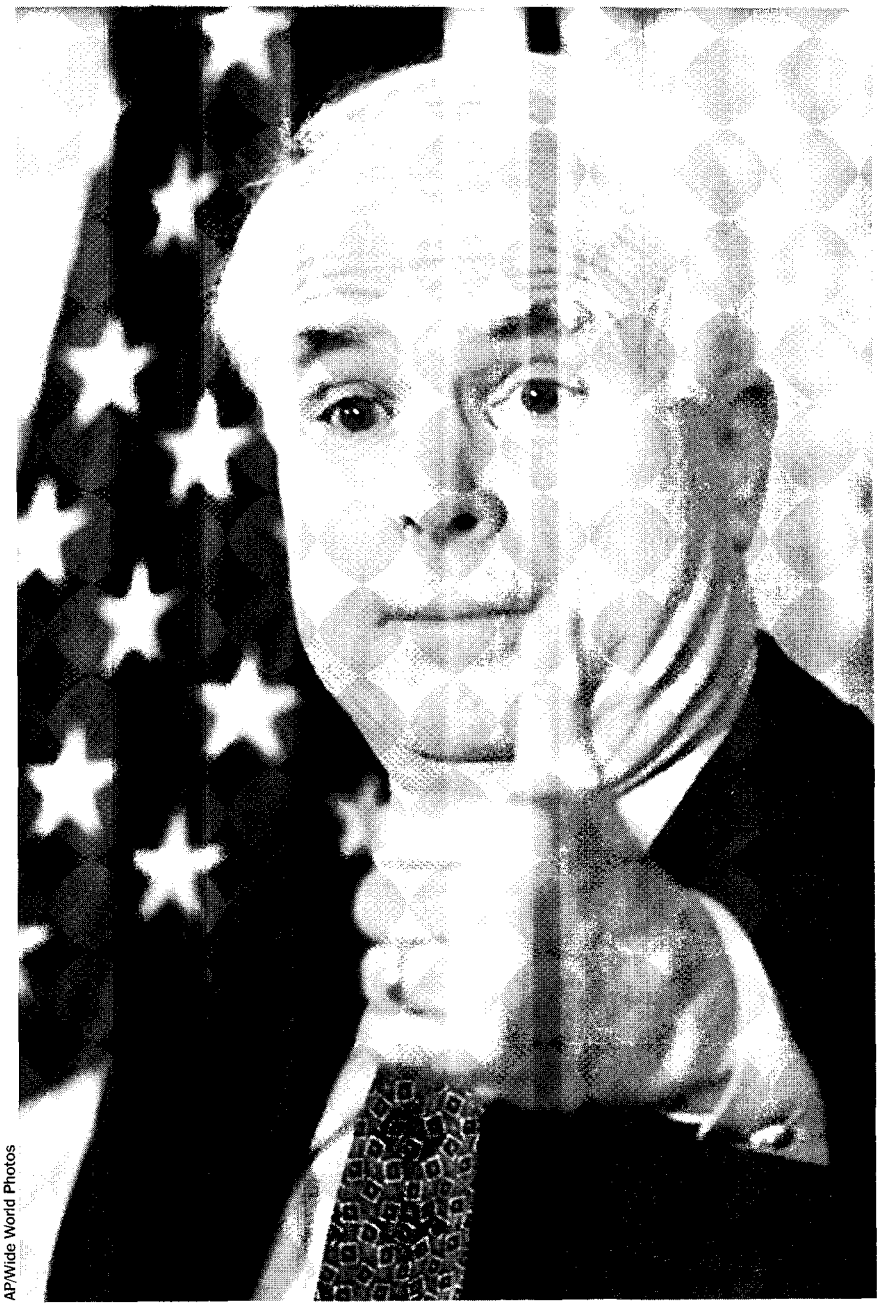

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Reagan could recite "Dan McGrew" from memory and challenged him to do so. The Queen Mother urged him on, saying she was a great fan of the poem's central character, "the lady that's known as Lou." Reagan obliged, unburdening himself of all 11 stanzas, with the Queen Mother chiming in at each mention of Lou. When they were finished, according to Reagan's account anyway, the table erupted in applause—probably excepting Trudeau, that snot. Royal-watchers, by the way, will be pleased to know that the Queen Mother's favorite, the lady that's known as Lou, is a homicidal slut.

The injection into presidential politics of a robust, popular poet—especially an all-but-forgotten poet like Robert Service—can only be a salutary development, notwithstanding that it came through the shenanigans of the poetasters from Comedy Central. In fact, the injection of any poetry at all, short of Neil Diamond lyrics, would be salutary for a campaign so otherwise lacking in rhetorical zip. THE WEEKLY STANDARD therefore canvassed the various presidential campaigns to discover the favorite poet and poem of each of the eight other major candidates: Bush, Gore, Bradley, Buchanan, Forbes, Hatch, Bauer, and Keyes. THE WEEKLY STANDARD defines "major candidate" generously.

At best our survey was slo-mo gotcha. Real gotcha requires the sudden intensity of an ambush, with rolling cameras pushed forward for pore-penetrating close-ups while the subject's facial muscles go spastic. But an ambush would require us to leave the office. Our survey was undertaken by phone, and the candidates had plenty of time to respond. Not that it made any difference. By deadline, only three had chosen to do so.

Pat Buchanan had a tie for his favorite poet, between W.H. Auden and T.S. Eliot, and through a spokesman he said (impishly?) that his favorite poem was Auden's "September 1, 1939"—a lamentation on the outbreak of World War II, which Buchanan thinks was unnecessary (the war, not the poem). Gary Bauer chose Robert Frost's "Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening" and the St. Crispin's Day Speech from *Henry V*. And Orrin Hatch, who as a hobby writes words for country music songs, selected a lyric by his favorite poet, Sara Teasdale. "*The restless rumble of the train / The drowsy people in the car / Steel blue twilight in the world / And in my heart a timid star*." Sara Teasdale, not surprisingly, committed suicide.

Voters can weigh these selections as they wish. A taste for poetry is surely no *prerequisite* for high office—indeed, too great a fondness for it could suggest a temperament ill-suited to politics, as the experience of Adlai Stevenson and Eugene McCarthy, both of them published poets, shows. Jimmy Carter too is a poet, though readers of *Always a Reckoning*, his book of poems published in 1995, may disagree. But the question of how one acquires a poetic taste can be instructive.

On the bus in New Hampshire, the wise-asses from Comedy Central were apparently impressed with McCain's performance. As they were breaking down their camera equipment, McCain mentioned offhandedly how he had come to memorize "Sam McGee."

"The guy in the cell next to me," he said, "it was his favorite poem. He used to tap it to me on the wall, in Morse Code. That's how I memorized it."

He gotcha. ◆

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Log Cabin Blues

Bush, McCain, and the controversy over gay Republicans. BY TUCKER CARLSON

LAST MONTH during an interview on *Meet the Press*, host Tim Russert asked George W. Bush if he planned to meet with the Log Cabin Republicans, a gay political group. "Oh, probably not," Bush replied. How come? asked Russert. "Well, because it creates a huge political scene," Bush said. "I mean, this is all—I am—I am—I am someone who is a uniter, not a divider. I don't believe in group thought, pitting one group of people against another. And all that does is kind of create a huge political, you know, nightmare for people."

Bush's response, which was meant to avoid trouble, instead kind of created something of a minor political, you know, nightmare for his campaign. Within days, Rich Tafel, the head of the Log Cabin Republicans, had made the rounds on cable television, been the subject of a sympathetic profile in the *New York Times* ("Gay Republican Cleaves to the Party Despite a Bush Snub"), and given numerous interviews to reporters writing Bush-in-clutches-of-far-Right stories. In one, Tafel described Bush's remarks on *Meet the Press* as "frightening." Bush campaign aides later explained that Bush had decided not to meet with Tafel because he didn't want to give Tafel's organization any more publicity. If so, it's fair to say that Bush's Log Cabin strategy has turned out to be, you know, counterproductive.

That's assuming there ever was a strategy. Some Bush advisers have said the candidate was caught off guard by Russert's question and simply gave the first response that came to mind. This doesn't make much sense, in part because his answer seems inconsistent with Bush's instincts (as governor he has happily made alliances with groups further to the left than the Log Cabin Republicans). And Bush could easily have pledged to meet with the group for purposes of explaining why he disagrees with them. Then Rich Tafel never would have had his *Times* profile.

Why did Bush pick a fight with media-savvy gay Republicans? Rich Tafel claims to have no idea. For more than a year, Tafel and Log Cabin spokesman Kevin Ivers were in friendly, regular contact with Bush's office. When Log Cabin delegates were denied a booth at the Texas Republican convention in Fort Worth in the summer of 1998, Bush promptly issued a statement on the group's behalf, declaring that "all individuals deserve to be treated with dignity and respect." When word spread among conservative activists that Bush was in league with Log Cabin, Karl Rove, Bush's chief strategist, called Kevin Ivers to laugh about it. According to Ivers, Rove said that while some social conservatives might believe that being linked to gay Republicans "will make us look bad, I think it'll make us look good."

A few weeks later, Rove faxed Tafel and Ivers a news release from the gay-baiting Westboro Baptist Church of Topeka, Kansas. "Is George W. Bush a stealth candidate for fags?" asked the headline. Below was a drawing of Bush wearing high heels and a dress. "Did you see this?" Rove said in a follow-up call. "It's hilarious." Back at Log Cabin headquarters in Washington, Tafel and Ivers thought that

Tucker Carlson is a staff writer at THE WEEKLY STANDARD.

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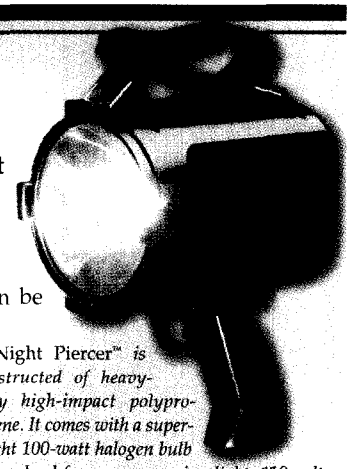

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Rove's message to them was clear: Can you believe these gay-bashing right-wingers? Aren't they horrible?

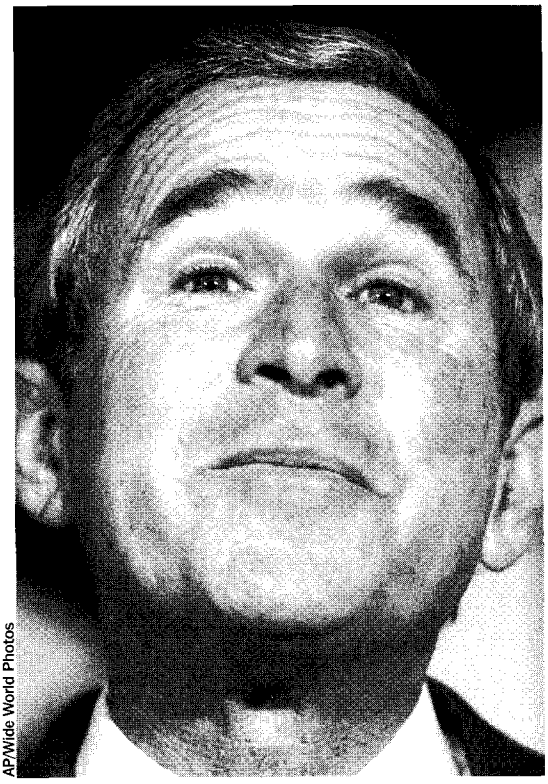
Tafel and Ivers liked the message. Soon there was a positive article about Bush posted on the front page of the Log Cabin website ("Bush Takes Big Step in Favor of Gay Rights"). A number of Log Cabin members began raising money for Bush, some quite successfully. At the Log Cabin national convention in New York this summer, Charlie Francis, a close friend of Bush's, gave a speech urging members to support the Bush campaign.

Then, in October, the relationship began to fall apart. Columnist Cal Thomas wrote a piece in the *Washington Times* about a meeting that took place in Washington this fall between Bush and a small group of politically active social conservatives. According to Thomas, Bush assured the group (which included Free Congress Foundation president Paul Weyrich, home school activist Mike Farris, and former senator Bill Armstrong of Colorado) that "he would not 'knowingly' appoint a practicing homosexual as an ambassador or department head."

Such a promise seemed flatly to contradict Bush's previous statements on gays; less than two months earlier, an editorial in the *New York Times* had congratulated the Texas governor for having "no qualms hiring homosexuals." The *Washington Blade*, a widely read gay paper, noticed the inconsistency and ran a long story about it. The *Blade* quoted Rich Tafel speaking of gay Bush supporters: "They're like, 'Oh, my God, I want to work on that campaign and I could be judged by that standard.'"

Tafel and Ivers say that it was around this time that Rove stopped returning their calls. Then came the Russert interview. Tafel's theory is that once Bush had raised all the money he could from gay supporters, there was no political benefit to be gained (and much political risk) from associating with the Log Cabin Republicans: "They were in fund-raising mode," Tafel says, "and they ran a fund-raising campaign first. Then it became a policy campaign."

Karl Rove snorts at the theory. The real reason Bush refused to meet with the Log Cabin Republicans, he says, is that they are media hounds with a hidden agenda and a penchant for embarrassing front-runners. (Bob Dole, you'll remember, reaped an enormous amount of bad press in 1996 as he deliberated over whether or not to return the group's $1,000 donation.) For over a year, says Rove, Tafel and Ivers demanded a meeting with Bush in Austin. "They were very insistent when the legislature was in session that they needed to come immediately. And it was all because there were issues in the legislature. Ivers was very direct about it: 'Rich wants to come down and have a dialogue with the governor about hate crimes.'"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When Rove explained that Bush was too busy, he says Ivers gave him a lecture about the importance of the gay vote: "'We think you're making a terrible mistake. There are 1,000,000 gay Republicans.' And they have their little litany about how significant this vote is and what needs to be done to cultivate it, and you know, through them is The Way." Rove wasn't impressed. "We've got a lot of gay Republicans involved in the campaign, on task forces and steering committees and so forth. But our thought was that it was not a high priority to meet with these two guys because their interest was in generating publicity for themselves." Not only that, says Rove, Log Cabin never planned to support Bush anyway. "They're doing a fund-raiser for John McCain."

It's true that Log Cabin is holding a McCain fund-raiser. McCain first met with Log Cabin representatives in mid-November. At the meeting, Ivers says, McCain's staff asked Log Cabin to raise money for the candidate. But Ivers swears it was only after Bush insulted the group on television that Log Cabin agreed to do it. As it stands, the fund-raiser is scheduled for December 14. Log Cabin members from around the country will meet over the Internet and make their donations by credit card. "McCain is going to address everyone by speakerphone," Ivers says excitedly.

Howard Opinsky, McCain's campaign spokesman, says he is unaware of the fund-raiser, but makes the point that McCain has not been a noted gay rights activist during his years in the Senate. McCain (like Bush) opposes gay adoption and gay marriage. He supports the military's "don't ask, don't tell" policy. He voted for the Defense of Marriage Act. "On an issue by issue basis, he doesn't line up on most of their issues," Opinsky says.

Still, a fund-raiser is a fund-raiser, and even Karl Rove doesn't seem eager to dismiss the idea of reconciliation. "The governor did not say he would not meet with them," Rove points out. "He said 'probably not.'" ♦

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The Importance of Beating Hillary

The New York Senate contest may eclipse the race for the presidency. BY JOHN PODHORETZ

New York

WE'RE STILL nine months away from the day when voters get to cast even a primary vote in the contest to fill Pat Moynihan's Senate seat. Neither of the two expected candidates has formally announced. But already the race has garnered more headlines, television time, and gossip at home and nationwide in this "out year" than 1998's exciting and important Senate battle (in which Democrat Chuck Schumer defeated two well-known primary challengers and then wiped out three-term Republican Al D'Amato in a landslide) did during the year in which it actually took place.

As things stand, this is going to be the most watched, written-about, talked-about, and closely-analyzed Senate race in the history of this country.

There are obvious reasons for this. The Republican candidate, Rudolph Giuliani, is now in the sixth year of a mind-bogglingly successful mayoralty that has transformed New York City. The mayor is such an iconic figure that he is known by those who love him and hate him by his nickname alone—he's become the best known Rudy in the United States.

But the real draw is, of course, the unprecedented presence in the race of the first lady of the United States, a candidacy that offers an equally unprecedented combination of attention-grabbing qualities:

- Hillary Clinton is a pop-culture celebrity at a time when *Entertainment Tonight* has more viewers than the evening news. In the year of the Stunt Candidacy—Warren Beatty, Cybill Shepherd, Donald Trump—Mrs. Clinton's is the only race in which the Stunt Candidate might actually win.
- The media continue to lavish amazingly patronizing special attention on women candidates. This "Gee, isn't it great that a *woman* is running" attitude has become the negative image of Dr. Johnson's misogynistic crack that "a woman's preaching is like a dog's walking on his hind legs. It is not done well; but you are surprised to find it done at all." There's no longer any reason to be surprised that women run for office, and given the propensity of the press to grant a female candidate an extra moment or two in the spotlight, they probably do it a little better than men these days. Still, the breathless boosterism continues, and it's an advantage for Mrs. Clinton.
- Last year, she became the most publicly humiliated wife—24 hours a day, 7 days a week, on five cable news networks—the world has ever known. Which makes Mrs. Clinton's race for Senate the ultimate test of the power and prevalence of the culture of victimization—whether voters will elect someone not because she's seen as strong, but in large measure because she's seen as weak.

There's another, far less obvious reason for the intensity of interest in the Hillary-Rudy race: It may represent the only clear-cut ideological battle we'll see in the next year in which stark differences between Republicans and Democrats will be aired in a far more open and direct way than in, say, the presidential race.

Contributing editor John Podhoretz is a columnist for the New York Post. *He is writing a book on the 2000 campaign for ReganBooks.*

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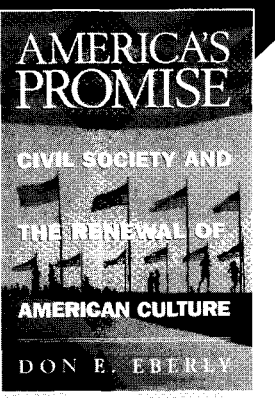

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The presidential candidates in both parties apparently believe it's in their interest to blur ideological lines. Republicans are speaking sentimentally about Social Security and how many Indian tribes support them, while Al Gore attacks Bill Bradley for considering tax increases. It's not hard to see where all this goes: In the general election, the Republican will spend half of his time speaking Spanish and talking diversity, while the Democrat goes to church every day and talks about the moral crisis facing the nation. The Republican will be doing his best to seem cheerful and compassionate, the Democrat sober and virtuous. Each party's choice will work frantically to buff his raw edges.

None of that is going to happen in the New York Senate race. The candidates are already chosen, the battle plans already clear. Hillary Clinton needs a massive minority turnout while trying to appeal to suburban women. Giuliani needs a massive turnout among upstate Republicans even as he reminds New York City voters of all he's done to make their lives better.

As a result, Mrs. Clinton is running as an unapologetic liberal-leftist. Her core supporters are the state's teachers' unions (it was local union head Randi Weingarten who asked Mrs. Clinton the staged question a few weeks ago whether she was running or not) and the immensely powerful hospital workers' union run by Dennis Rivera. (Hospitals are a colossal business in the state; they employ some 400,000 people and are supported by some $2.4 billion in public sector spending.)

Giuliani has shifted to the right this fall. He has taken an uncompromising stand against the Brooklyn Museum of Art's sponsorship of the offensive "Sensation" exhibit and has instituted strong policies to cope with the problem of homelessness. He wants homeless parents to join welfare-to-work programs or be thrown out of shelters and their kids removed to foster care. And he has ordered police to roust the hard-case homeless into shelters.

The Clinton campaign thinks it can convince voters that Rudy is mean and nasty by calling dramatic attention to his new homeless policies. In the first direct attack on her putative opponent, Mrs. Clinton hauled out the old saw that Joseph and Mary were homeless, too, when they ended up in the stable (untrue; they had a home, but it was in Nazareth, and they had journeyed to Bethlehem to pay taxes).

On December 5 in Union Square Park, a thousand people turned out for a 24-hour protest against the mayor and his homelessness policies. Demonstrations like this will be a key tactic of this Senate campaign: Mrs. Clinton was first convinced Giuliani might be vulnerable to her challenge after the well-coordinated two-week demonstrations early this year in front of police headquarters following the mistaken shooting of the unarmed Amadou Diallo by police. The complaint seemed to be that the mayor didn't apologize enough for the killing, even though he had apologized almost every day for two months. The clear purpose of the demonstrations was to drive the mayor's poll numbers down from their stratospheric levels and make a Democratic candidacy against him seem like more than just a joke.

Well, it's no joke. Indeed, for many people, the outcome of the New York Senate contest is of more pressing concern than any other race in the country. In the past month alone, at least a dozen conservatives have told me that they care more about defeating Mrs. Clinton than they do about the Republicans taking back the White House.

At first glance, this seems insane. What could be more important than the ideological orientation and partisan affiliation of the man in the Oval Office? But consider. These two candidates are both political superstars. Hillary Clinton is one of the most famous people on earth. Rudolph Giuliani is an astonishingly fluent and powerful speaker and a remarkably confident proponent of the views he holds. Although Giuliani has some lingering problems with conservatives in New York, particularly given his support for partial-birth abortion, this race will inevitably make him a hero to the Right—especially when the Clinton machine begins assaulting him.

Whichever one makes it to Washington, the next senator from New York will be a national figure and possible national candidate. New York could well be picking a future president in the year 2000.

Ultimately, though, the importance of the Senate race has to do with the meaning of Hillary Clinton's candidacy. Whether the Democrats choose Gore or Bradley, the party's nominee next year will be fleeing Bill Clinton. For better or worse, Hillary Clinton will be carrying the mantle of Clintonism into November 2000, and that means the New York election is going to be the true referendum on Bill Clinton's presidency. For all who consider this presidency a moral calamity, a Giuliani victory on November 3, 2000, would be a particular and most welcome cause for celebration. ♦

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White Candidates Seek Black Voters

Bradley tries to narrow Gore's lead among African Americans. BY MATTHEW REES

Baltimore

IF BILL BRADLEY WINS the Democratic nomination for president, he may have Omeria Scott to thank.

Scott is a state representative from Mississippi, chairman of the legislature's black caucus, and an Al Gore supporter. Or at least she *was* a Gore supporter.

After listening to both Gore and Bradley speak here earlier this month, at the annual convention of the National Black Caucus of State Legislators, she was so impressed with Bradley she retracted her Gore endorsement on the spot and is now enthusiastically backing the former New Jersey senator. "I liked what Bradley said," Scott told me, "particularly on the living wage. I think he will be gaining more and more support from African Americans."

Scott's endorsement will be significant if it can be used as leverage to persuade undecided black voters, if not more of Gore's black supporters, to take a closer look at Bradley. The logic is simple: If Bradley is to have a real chance of defeating Gore, he must boost his support among blacks in early contests like South Carolina, Mississippi, Louisiana, Maryland, Georgia, and Florida, where they will be anywhere from 20 percent to 50 percent of all Democratic voters. "The black vote will be pivotal in determining the Democratic nominee," says Ron Lester, a Democratic pollster and expert in black voting patterns.

At the moment, that's a problem for Bradley. Gore, for example, has wrapped up many, many more endorsements from black elected officials: Twenty members of the Congressional Black Caucus are backing him; none are with Bradley. And in a recent Associated Press poll of black voters nationwide, the vice president was leading by 33 points, 57-24. In hopes of building on this lead, Gore was scheduled to attend a major rally in Atlanta on December 11 to showcase his popularity with black voters.

The good news for Bradley? Scott was not the only black legislator who warmly received his speech in Baltimore. Afterwards, I spoke with a number of people in the audience who said that while they weren't entirely familiar with Bradley, they liked what they heard. "Based on what I saw," said Charles Hudson, a Louisiana state representative, "I would have no problem supporting Senator Bradley." Having watched Gore's speech the day before, Hudson also believes that in his district "Bradley would be a much easier sell than the vice president."

It's clear from talking to black legislators that there's no great enthusiasm for Gore. Typical was the response of Kay Patterson, a South Carolina state senator, when I asked him why he was a Gore supporter. He cited Gore's service with Bill Clinton and mentioned that Gore has been endorsed by Jim Clyburn, a black congressman from South Carolina. When I pressed him for more rea-

Matthew Rees is a staff writer at THE WEEKLY STANDARD.

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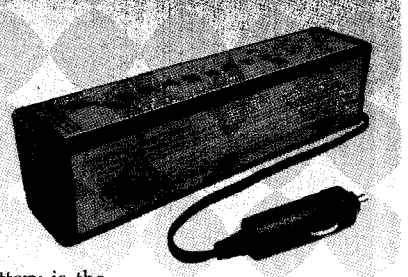

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sons, he said, "Over the years Gore has been friendly toward black folks." But he conceded, "I could just as easily go with Bill Bradley."

Others agreed that Gore's support was soft—and that it didn't seem to be getting any stronger. Donald Bonner, a North Carolina state representative who hasn't endorsed either candidate, said, "Gore's lead over Bradley could change very easily." Kenneth Melvin, a member of Virginia's House of Delegates, said "The more he distances himself from Clinton, the more he risks alienating his core support from black voters." (In his entire speech, Gore mentioned Clinton only once, in passing.) Chris Smith, a Florida state representative, had a slightly different complaint: He's received three letters from the Gore campaign, and all three have been addressed, "Dear Black Elected Official." Said Smith: "The least they should be able to do is a merge file."

The Gore campaign seems to understand it needs to firm up its black support. It's begun running ads on black radio touting Gore's efforts to preserve affirmative action and his support for Carol Moseley-Braun, the ethically challenged former senator whose ambassadorial nomination was until recently being held up by Senate Republicans. (Bradley is not yet running any ads in the black-oriented media.) And late last month Gore rearranged his schedule so he could attend a tribute to Rosa Parks in Detroit. It conveniently yielded a photo of them posing together, which Gore aides are sure to feature in campaign literature.

Gore and his operatives haven't stopped there. They've also cast Bradley as racially insensitive. In September, after Bradley proposed amending the 1964 Civil Rights Act to provide protection for gays, the Gore campaign said the move would be an invitation for Republicans to repeal other portions of the landmark legislation. That criticism tapered off once Coretta Scott King, the wife of Martin Luther King Jr., said she supported Bradley's stance. But in the meantime Gore had escalated his demonization of Bradley's plan for overhauling Medicaid.

Last month, Gore was speaking outside a southern California community center—it just happened to be named for baseball trailblazer Jackie Robinson—and observed that one-third of all black children depend on Medicaid. "I call on Senator Bradley," thundered Gore, "to reconsider a program that has such a harsh impact on low-income and working families in this country!"

Gore's campaign manager, Donna Brazile, upped the ante in a subsequent television appearance, charging that Bradley's "plan to eliminate Medicaid has serious complications and risk in the African-American community." Speaking on the day of Bradley's Madison Square Garden fund-raiser, Brazile said, "I don't have to read a poll or look at statistics, and I'm sure Dr. J wouldn't have to as well if he called . . . some of his family and relatives."

Bradley responded a few days later with an appearance at a black medical school in Atlanta, where he chided Gore for using "scare tactics" (he was introduced by black historian Roger Wilkins). But the attacks have continued. In connection with Gore's speech to the black legislators, his campaign issued a press release highlighting how blacks would be "disproportionately harmed" by Bradley's Medicaid proposal. Says Jacques DeGraff, the top black staffer on Bradley's campaign, "These tactics are not going to work."

Maybe. Maybe not. At the Baltimore convention of black state legislators, I didn't speak with anyone who mentioned Bradley's Medicaid plan as a reason not to support him. A bigger concern for Bradley is name recognition. A Joint Center for Political and Economic Studies poll in August found 42 percent of blacks didn't know who Bradley was. Ron Lester, the Democratic pollster, points out that if black voters are introduced to Bradley as racially insensitive—the goal of the Gore campaign—it could greatly undermine his candidacy.

The immediate problem facing Bradley is time. If he's going to win over southern black voters, he needs to be campaigning in the South. But if he wants his campaign to be alive in March, he needs to fare well in February in Iowa and New Hampshire.

Bradley's other problem is that he'll be up against a well-oiled machine when votes start being cast in the South. Gore's campaign manager, Brazile, developed a highly-successful strategy for getting southern black voters to turn out in 1998, and there's no doubt she'll be using it again in the presidential primaries. Indeed, in an interview last month with James Brosnan of the Memphis *Commercial Appeal*, she was candid about the campaign's game plan: "I'm pushing to win Iowa, do very, very well in New Hampshire, make [Bradley] defend his base in the East, and force him to come South, where we can take him on and beat him."

Bradley's aides may be tempted to chalk that up to campaign bravado. But unless they launch a major organizational effort in the South—and do so quickly—it's hard to see how Brazile's prediction won't come true. ♦

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Ethnic Cleansing, Russian Style

This isn't the first time Moscow has targeted Chechens. BY ANNE APPLEBAUM

FIRST THERE WERE "miserly Jews." Then there were "sneaky Orientals." Now, thanks to the power of the media to transmit ideas across borders, another ethnic stereotype has entered the English language. Translated from the Russian, the hitherto unfamiliar "Chechen terrorist" is slowly becoming part of our political lexicon.

Here is how Boris Yeltsin used it, just before stomping off from the European security summit in Istanbul last month: "We want peace and a political solution to the situation in Chechnya . . . to achieve this, there has to be complete elimination of the gangs, eradication of the terrorists." Here is how one of Russia's generals used it: The war in Chechnya will not be halted, he said recently, until after "the full destruction of terrorists." He went on to claim that the Chechen president had "directly linked up with terrorist formations," that two of the leading Chechen military commanders were "terrorists," and that the entire Chechen government worked closely with "terrorist and bandit formations."

In Moscow, this language is repeated constantly—except that away from the television cameras, Chechens are referred to as "blacks." On a recent trip there, I was stopped walking into a government building because I didn't have the Moscow residency permit that the security guards, then in a frenzied search for illegally resident "Chechen terrorists," required. Eventually they let me in, however: They would make an exception in my case because, they said, I didn't look like a "black." So powerful is this rhetoric, that Russian politicians are afraid to oppose it. "It is repulsive," writes Yevgenia Albats, one of Moscow's braver journalists, "that even politicians with democratic leanings are keeping silent for fear of slipping in the ratings."

So powerful, in fact, is this rhetoric, that it has filtered its way into popular understanding of the Chechen war—or rather wars—in the West. I've lately heard, several times, an argument which goes like this: Terrorism is bad. International terrorism is worse. Aren't the Russians therefore right to be fighting this lawless Islamic republic? Aren't they right to attack them for setting off bombs in Moscow apartment blocks?

In response, I could point out that nobody except the Russian government has linked the Chechens to international terrorism. I could add that nobody has proven their connection to the still mysterious Moscow bombings. But why should I or anyone need to make either argument? Given the history of this part of the world, it is not the Chechens who need to be defended from racist insults, but the Russians who need to explain the hubris that allows them to speak of the Chechens in anything but embarrassed and apologetic tones. For the Russians have reduced the Chechens to the status of "bandit state" before, and for similar reasons. Before one group of people can feel itself justified in destroying another, it is first necessary to remove its humanity. First you say, "they are not like us." Then you say, "they are not like us, and they cannot live among us." From there, it is a very short step to say, "they are not like us; they cannot live among us; therefore, they cannot live."

Over the past century, Russia's leaders have proved expert at thus dehumanizing their enemies. The use of biological designations ("poisonous weeds" or "parasites") and political insults ("enemies of the people") dates back to Lenin himself, who in one infamous essay proposed to "purge the Russian land of all kinds of harmful insects." Stalin refined the technique and pioneered its use against particular ethnic groups, as well as class enemies and political opponents. As early as 1937, Nikolai Yezhov, chief of the Soviet secret police, signed an order: "On the fascist-rebellion, espionage, defeatism, diversion and terrorist activity of Polish spies in the USSR." Although similar to other orders of the time, which demanded the arrests of kulaks or Trotskyites, this one surprised even some of Yezhov's colleagues, who understood it as an order to arrest anyone with Polish blood, a Polish passport, or any Polish connections at all. Over the next few years, 180,000 Poles or alleged "Polish sympathizers" resident in the Soviet Union were duly imprisoned or shot, among them (rather satisfyingly) Nikolai Yezhov.

During the war years, the number of enemy ethnicities rose. As the Red Army marched west, orders were variously given for the murder and deportation of Lithuanians and Latvians, Ukrainians and Estonians, Moldovans, Armenians, Greeks, Bulgars, Hungarians, and other peoples who happened to live in the newly occupied Soviet territories (or even in the old territories) and seemed less than accommodating to the Soviet regime.

Then, as the war turned in Stalin's favor, he ordered even more brutal attacks on those "enemy nations" who remained within the Soviet borders. Not satisfied with the slow method of arresting "spies" or "diversionaries" and shipping them off to camps, he found a faster method to eliminate completely a few, not especially popular, tiny nations whose

A journalist based in Warsaw and London, Anne Applebaum is writing a history of Soviet concentration camps.

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AP/Wide World Photos

Russian soldiers shelling Grozny, the Chechen capital

existence disturbed him. These included the Crimean Tatars, the Volga Germans, the Balkars, Karachai, Kalymyks, Ingush, and, more to the point, the Chechens. Before attempting to destroy the Chechens, Stalin first labeled them "war criminals." Under this rubric, the entire nation was accused of Nazi collaboration, and the entire nation suffered.

All of the Chechens—all of them, men, women, and children—were given a few hours to pack what pots and pans and warm coats they could carry, crammed into cattle trucks and goods trains, and unceremoniously dumped in the wastes of northern Kazakhstan, where half of them died of starvation. Those who survived returned home only in the late 1950s, after Stalin's death.

If it was not quite genocide, then it was ethnicide: Stalin intended that the Chechen people should, sooner or later, cease to exist. As a culture, as a nation with a language and a history, they were meant to vanish, having been removed from the land which had been theirs. Which is why the Russians, if they knew their history, if they really remembered what they had done to the Chechens in the past, would be no more able today to deride the Chechens as a "bandit nation" or to speak of "total elimination" of this "bandit nation" than Germans could speak comfortably about the total elimination of the Jews.

What we are now witnessing in contemporary Russia is no ordinary outbreak of racism, no simple case of abuse of military enemies. The Russian leadership's insistence on using the adjective "terrorist" before every mention of the word "Chechen" is not merely a piece of successful wartime propaganda, although it is also that: 65 percent of Russians support the use of force against Chechnya. What we are witnessing, with the encirclement of Grozny and the killing of civilians is the first concrete consequence of the Russian refusal to come fully to terms with the Soviet past. For the past decade, those Russian historians and journalists who have labored to uncover and describe the crimes of the past have found themselves working in relative obscurity and silence. Among most Russians, there is no popular understanding—and no willingness to understand.

Our own reaction, although not as dramatic, is hardly better. Again, if we really felt—if we really, viscerally felt—that what Stalin did to the Chechens was evil, it is not only Boris Yeltsin who would be unable to bombard Chechen civilians now, but we who would be unable to sit back with equanimity and watch. The West's response to the first Chechen war was shocking: We turned away and called it an internal Russian matter. Our response this time is still insufficient. There have been calls for a "peaceful solution" and some mumbling about humanitarian issues, alongside some carefully worded support for the Russian "fight against terrorism." No one, however, has expressed moral horror. But the assault on the Chechens *is* a moral horror.

Of course, we cannot force the Russians to study their history, any more than we can force the Russians to withdraw from Grozny. We are not going to bomb Moscow as we bombed Belgrade, even if that were the right thing to do. But in Western public reactions and statements, we might at least express some outrage, manifest some awareness of what was done to the Chechens in the past. How often have you heard that "history which is not remembered is liable to be repeated"? The truth, alas, is that we don't even live by our own clichés. ♦

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The Unpardonable Leonard Peltier

Why does the Left want to release the murderer of two FBI agents? BY MARK TOOLEY

DURING THE COLD WAR, Soviet propagandists and Western "progressives" routinely charged that the United States had "political prisoners" of its own: "freedom fighters" locked up by the Justice Department for "crimes of conscience." The complaint has lost steam in recent years. There is no longer a Cold War to animate it. And many of the most celebrated American "political prisoners" of the 1960s and 1970s simply aren't prisoners any more.

One such Cold War-era case remains alive, however. Millions of Soviet citizens once "spontaneously" signed petitions demanding the release of Leonard Peltier, a mid-1970s American Indian Movement (AIM) gunman serving a life sentence for murder. The Russians have since forgotten about the matter. But an astonishing number of Western would-be do-gooders—Amnesty International, the European Parliament, rock bands, the National Council of Churches, and Hollywood celebrities like Danny Glover and Susan Sarandon—have refused to let it drop. Indeed, their efforts have lately intensified, even as their claim that Peltier is innocent has never seemed weaker.

November was "Freedom Month for Leonard Peltier" in the nation's capital, a series of events organized by his defense committee. Using the United Methodist Building on Capitol Hill as their headquarters, these activists demonstrated in front of the White House and lobbied congressional offices on behalf of their imprisoned hero. Peltier, they insisted, is only the most recent major victim of a centuries-long U.S. assault on Native Americans.

"Leonard Peltier is typical of the abuse of other native people," said Jennifer Harbury at a Lafayette Park rally a few weeks ago. Harbury directs a "human rights" group in California and has waged a long battle to implicate the Guatemalan government in the death of her husband, who was a leftist guerrilla in that country. Peltier "is a symbol of the campaigns of oppression" waged by white people throughout the Americas, she announced. "It seems the federal government is using this as an example of what could happen to us if we are out of line," added Coki Tree Spirit, another pro-Peltier activist.

Peltier himself addressed the Lafayette Park rally with a recorded message. "I still cannot understand that with the millions of people around the world demanding my freedom the government can still ignore it."

Maybe the fact that he is guilty has something to do with it.

On June 26, 1975, two FBI agents, 28-year-old Jack Coler and 27-year-old Ronald Williams, were on the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation in South Dakota, searching for a torture and robbery suspect named Jimmy Eagle. They spotted a vehicle matching the description of Eagle's van and followed it into a pasture near where Peltier and other AIM members were residing. Then, Williams called in a report that the van had stopped on a rise and that its occupants had emerged with rifles and appeared ready to shoot. The agents were trapped in their cars in an open field, armed only with service revolvers and a single rifle in Coler's trunk.

Williams was hit first, in the arm and side. Coler seems to have crawled to the back of his car for his rifle, but he got off only a single shot before his arm was nearly severed by return fire. Despite his own wound, Williams managed to apply a tourniquet to his colleague. But Coler was unconscious, and, realizing further resistance was futile, Williams apparently attempted to surrender. The two agents had managed to get off only five shots. Their cars had been hit at least 125 times by long-range rifles, semiautomatics, and an AR-15 assault rifle.

Some number of gunmen—dozens of Peltier's fellow militants may have joined the battle from a nearby camp—then walked down the rise toward the FBI agents. Williams held up a hand in front of the executioner's gun; a bullet blew off three of his fingers and the back of his skull. Coler was shot in the head and throat from less than two feet away.

An FBI rescue party killed one AIM suspect and captured another but the rest initially eluded them. A witness at the scene identified Peltier as the driver of the van Williams and Coler had been following, and his thumbprint was found inside. In November 1975, an Oregon state trooper stopped a vehicle that Peltier was driving. Peltier responded with gunfire and escaped into the woods. He left behind Agent Coler's revolver—again, with Peltier's incriminating thumbprint on it—along with eight other guns, a collection of hand grenades, and 350 pounds of dynamite.

In February 1976, Peltier was finally arrested in Canada by the Royal Canadian Mounted Police. After a lengthy appeals process, he was extradited to the United States. At his trial the next year, three witnesses said they had seen Peltier walk toward Coler and Williams with the AR-15 murder weapon moments before they were executed. The Mounties who captured Peltier testified that he had volunteered an explanation for the killings: The agents, he had mistak-

Mark Tooley is the director of the United Methodist Committee at the Institute on Religion and Democracy.

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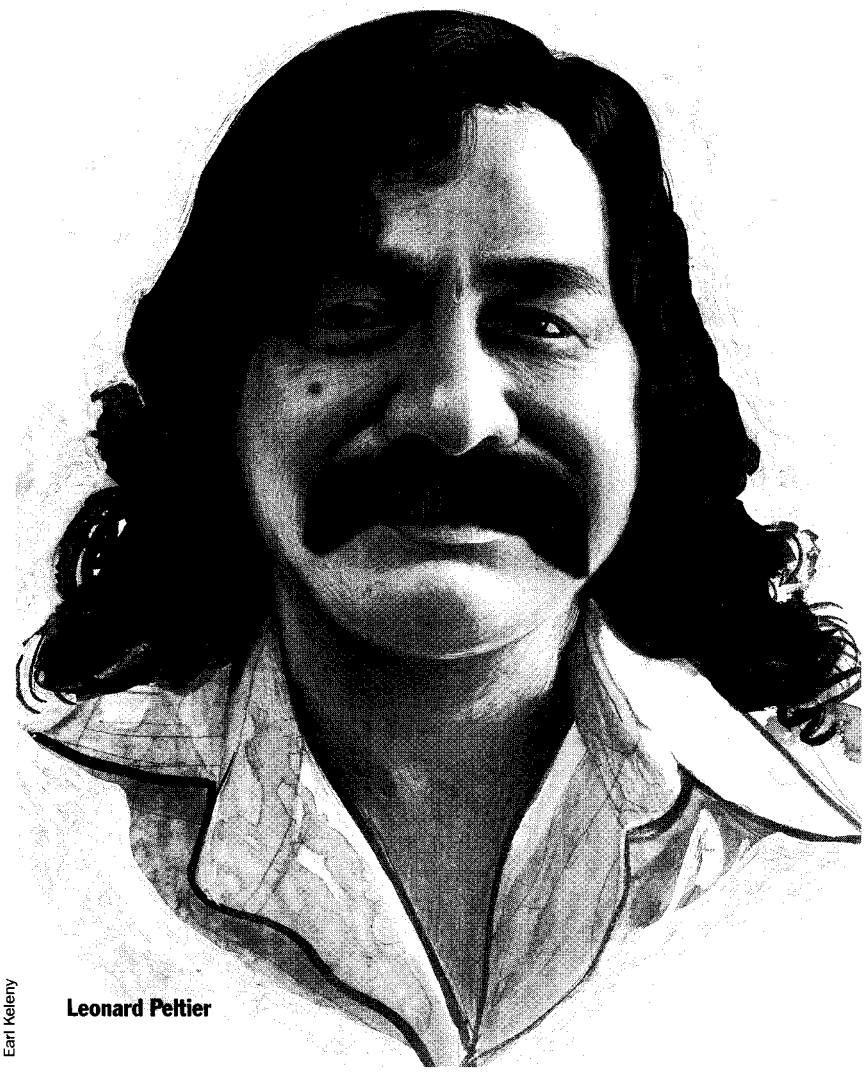

Earl Keleny

Leonard Peltier

enly believed, were looking for *him*—to arrest him for the 1972 attempted shooting of a Milwaukee police officer. A jury in Fargo, North Dakota, took 10 hours to convict Peltier on two counts of murder, for which he would be legally guilty even if he had not fired the actual bullets that killed the FBI agents. He was given two consecutive life sentences.

Journalist Peter Matthiessen's 1983 book *In the Spirit of Crazy Horse* quibbled with the overwhelming forensic evidence that Coler and Williams were killed by Peltier's AR-15 rifle. The book suggested, instead, that a vast conspiracy involving the FBI, judges, prosecutors, coroners, and the Canadian Mounties had contrived to frame Peltier because he threatened white corporate America's interests in valuable uranium deposits on the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation. Those uranium deposits have never been found. And Matthiessen's book was later withdrawn from circulation for several years in the face of libel suits.

But *In the Spirit of Crazy Horse* helped spark the "Free Leonard Peltier" movement. Oliver Stone purchased the film rights. Robert Redford used it as the basis for a highly distorted documentary. And when the book was reissued in 1991, Matthiessen produced a new piece of "evidence" in the case: a filmed interview with a hooded "Mr. X," who claimed to be the "real" murderer.

Except that he wasn't. In the course of an exhaustive 1995 investigation of the Peltier controversy, Scott Anderson of *Outside* magazine interviewed one of Peltier's original codefendants, who told him flat-out that "there is no Mr. X. Those are all lies." Anderson also made clear that Peltier was never the significant American Indian Movement leader his advocates make him out to be—but only a "bodyguard" for AIM, hired "muscle" with a long and frightening history of armed violence.

None of which seems to matter to the people massed in Lafayette Park last month. They have been encouraged by President Clinton's recent pardon of the 1970s Puerto Rican FALN terrorists. Peltier, too, has a long-pending clemency petition on file at the Justice Department. Perhaps, come Christmas, the president will finally "free Leonard," who—his defenders continue to imagine, against all logic—has long been targeted by the U.S. government for destruction simply on account of his beliefs.

Then again, perhaps Clinton will not free Peltier. He certainly shouldn't. Peltier has never expressed any regret for his crimes and continues to deny the worst of them. "I was there that day," he grudgingly acknowledges of the murders for which he was convicted. "But we were attacked, and we had a right to defend ourselves, and so I fired back"—though "Mr. X" delivered the coup de grâce. Peltier sees himself a martyr and gladly accepts the mythology that has grown up around him. He signs his letters "In the Spirit of Crazy Horse."

In a striking departure from common practice, FBI director Louis Freeh has publicly opposed any possibility of clemency for Peltier. "Leonard Peltier was convicted of grave crimes," he said in 1994, "and there should be no commutation of his two consecutive terms of life in prison." Organizations representing both current and former special agents of the Bureau also actively oppose clemency, calling Peltier a "vicious, violent, and cowardly criminal who hides behind the Native American Community."

Before he gives even a thought to pardoning this man, President Clinton should listen to his FBI. Jack Coler, Ronald Williams, and their families still deserve our sympathy. Leonard Peltier, the man who killed Coler and Williams, deserves many more years in prison. ♦

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A Chump on the Stump

Donald Trump pretends to run for President.

By Matt Labash

Los Angeles

Of all the bizarre twists Campaign 2000 has taken, there is none so strange as the one that finds us on the rooftop of L'Ermitage hotel in Beverly Hills. The media have come to explore the possible presidential candidacy of Donald Trump, who has himself formed an exploratory committee, blanketed the talk shows, and threatened to spend $100 million to win not just the Reform party nomination, but "the whole megillah."

L'Ermitage is a magnet for studio junkets and celebrities convalescing after rhinoplasty. The hotel's suites run up to $3,800 per night, so demanding guests can expect amenities like personalized cell phones and 88-inch pool towels. It's what The Donald would call a "class facility," and he knows of what he speaks. Not only is Trump, in his own demure phraseology, "the biggest developer in the hottest city in the world," but his very pores emit class. In fact, he uses the word frequently—as an adjective, not a noun. Thus, everything associated with him is classy, even unauthorized biographies, like *The Really, Really Classy Donald Trump Quiz Book*.

Standing on the panoramic rooftop next to the classy pool, reporters anticipate Trump's arrival for a press conference. While waiting, we help ourselves to the Purel hand-sanitizers that Trump aides have kindly set out in a fishbowl. The Donald thinks shaking hands is "barbaric" and unhygienic. Politics, however, is about compromise. Twenty yards away, a television crew sets up for an interview with actress Whoopi Goldberg. I have spent so much time talking to Trump's aides over the past week that I feel qualified to speak not only for them, but *like* them. So I approach the Goldberg camp, informing no one in particular, "Mr. Trump doesn't like to share the spotlight."

"Whoopi doesn't either," snaps a Goldberg lackey, "and she's a *real* celebrity." The Trump camp tries unsuccessfully to get the Goldberg camp to relocate. So instead of conducting the press conference by the shaded pool, the Trump press conference moves to a sun-scorched section of the terrace, making The Donald squint even more than usual.

As he takes the podium, Trump's entire entourage is present. There's Roger Stone, his political *consigliere*, who is, as always, immaculately and ornately haberdashed in *café-au-lait* suede shoes and a gangster boldstripe suit. "I haven't bought off the rack since I was 17," says Stone. There is Trump's bodyguard, all muscle and menace. His name is Matt Calamari, so we immediately start calling him "Matty the Squid," though not to his face. Most important, there is Melania Knauss, Trump's 26-year-old supermodel girlfriend, who is four years removed from her native Slovenia. *Melania.* Her name is like a song. Her skirt is short, her heels are high. Her legs are so long that her torso seems an afterthought. She'd make a class first lady.

Trump tells us that he will be forgoing individual interviews because of the crush of media present. There are only ten of us, and three of us are from German television; The Donald would have time to do interviews, close a deal, and still take Melania shopping before his next engagement. But no matter. Though he will ultimately decide on running for president after "going by my gut," he says his internal "polling has been amazing." He will not tell us the name of his pollster. Nor will he tell us the names of the economists he consulted for his debt-reduction plan, which calls for a one-time 14.5 percent tax on the entire net worth of the richest Americans (and Trump calls Bill Bradley a socialist). Trump quickly wraps up the press conference, promising us more later, and disappears with Melania and the Squid. He does not shake our Purel-coated hands.

Stone immediately swoops in for spin, assuring us that the polling, which Trump seemed suspiciously vague about, is concerned with issues, not the horse race. Stone

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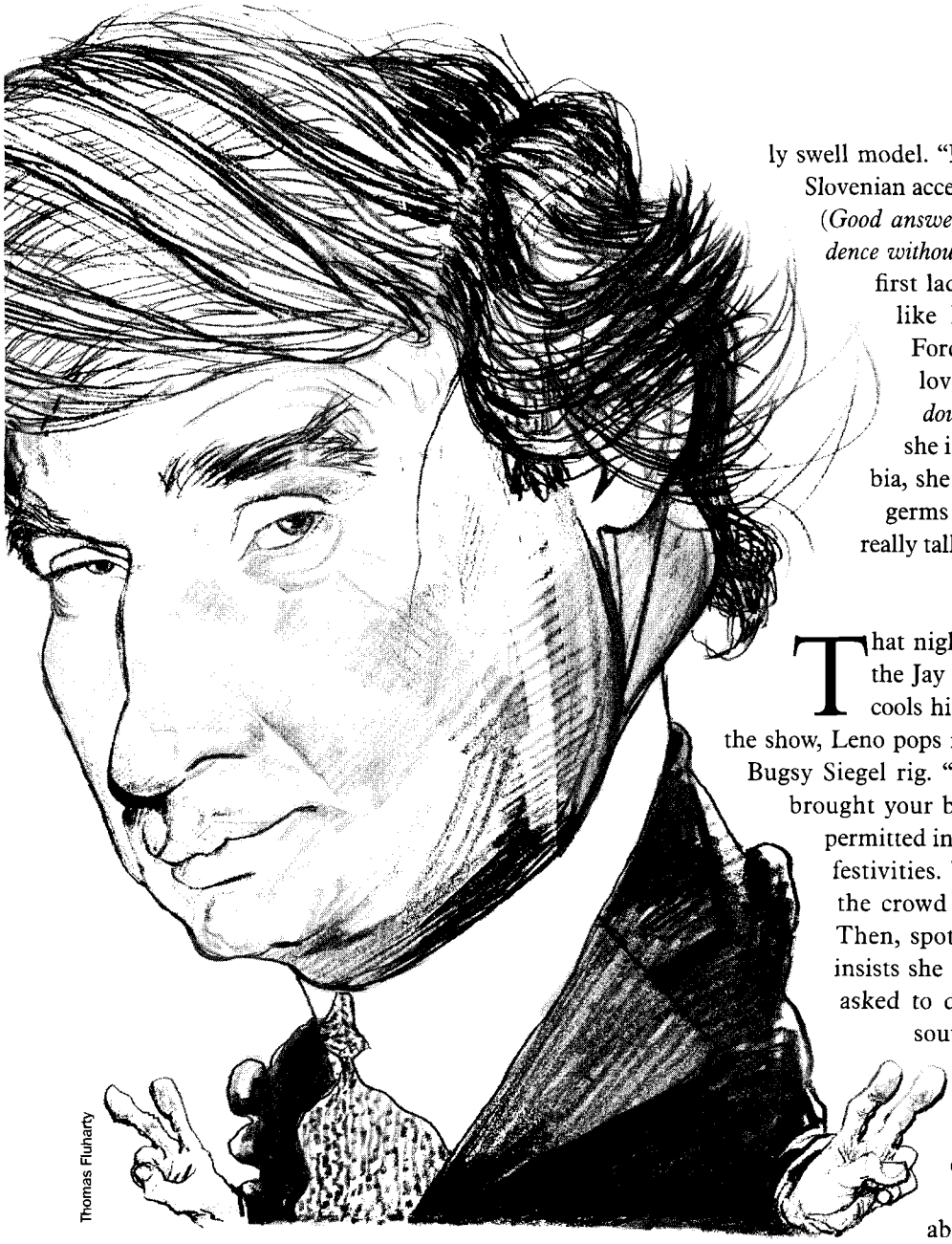

Thomas Fluharty

says they are smoking Pat Buchanan in polls of Reform party members, but have not polled the general election. This seems an odd claim, in light of Trump's "whole megillah" strategy. But we are quickly on to more important things, like how Stone is able to achieve a perfect double-dimple below his tie knot. Stone insists I remove my tie, and as we document his every move, he puts on a double-dimple clinic. "It takes a while to learn," he says. "We're gonna have to work on it."

With Trump off-limits until that evening, Stone sets up a media availability with Melania. Next to a lobby anteroom where Melania sits, Whoopie Goldberg waltzes by. I ask her if she'd support a Trump candidacy. "What does he stand for?" she asks. "Donald Trump," deadpans another reporter. Melania is getting used to this sort of cynicism, and she is not easy pickings for interrogators. I ask her if she considers herself a supermodel, or just a really swell model. "I'm a person first," she says in her Slovenian accent, "and then I have a great career." (*Good answer: Decisive. Evasive. Conveys confidence without conceit.*) When asked whether, as first lady, she would have a pet initiative like Barbara Bush's literacy or Betty Ford's alcoholism, she responds, "Yes, I love children." (*Textbook: When in doubt, invoke children.*) When asked if she is creeped out by Trump's germ phobia, she says, "You know, there are a lot of germs from colds and flu, and nobody is really talking about this." (*What a pro.*)

That night, we follow Trump to a taping of the Jay Leno show in Burbank. As Trump cools his heels in the dressing room before the show, Leno pops in for a visit, and sees Stone in his Bugsy Siegel rig. "Hey Donald," cracks Leno, "you brought your bookie." We journalists are briefly permitted into the studio to watch the pre-show festivities. Warm-up comic Bob Perlow plies the crowd with stale jokes and show tunes. Then, spotting Melania in the audience, he insists she come up to the stage, where she is asked to dance seductively while throwing souvenir t-shirts into the audience. *Tonight Show* staffers claim this is a pre-game tradition, but one suspects they invented it as an excuse to watch Melania gyrate.

She is supremely uncomfortable and refuses to comply, darting back to her seat, which is a piano wire's width away from Matty the Squid's. Wisely, Perlow does not persist. Stone comes out and stands next to me. He is concerned for Melania's well-being. But mostly, he is concerned about my newly double-dimpled tie. "No good," he says, shaking his head disapprovingly.

Back in the green room, after the show begins, we munch melon wedges and finger sandwiches with singer Michael Bolton's entourage. A Leno staffer says we will not be permitted into Trump's dressing room after the show. I protest to Stone, who, like any Trump devotee, tries to make a deal. He'll get us access, "but you'll refrain from making fun of Mr. Trump's hair again." Stone is referring to an article I wrote some months ago in which I charged that Mr. Trump's coif resembled an abandoned nest. Having now seen Trump's hair up close, I make no promises.

Though Leno mercilessly rags Trump, alleging at one

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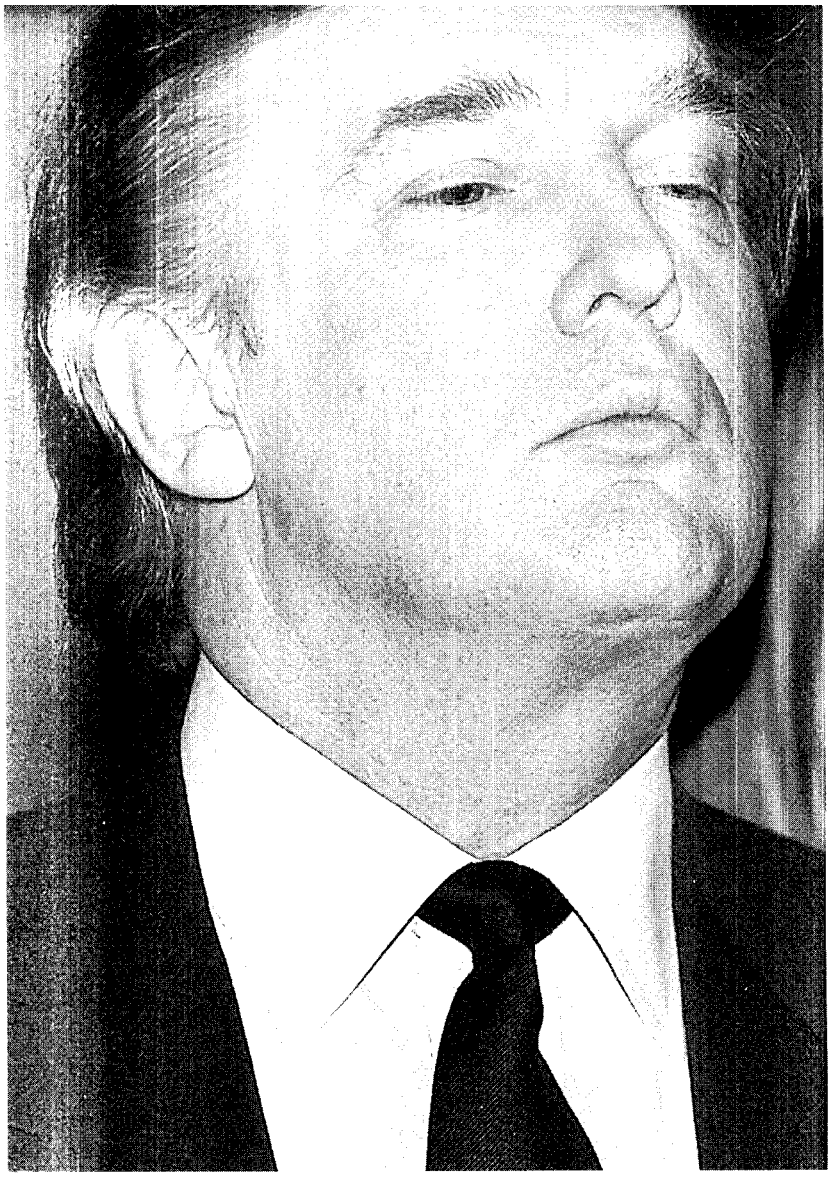
point that he caught a sexually transmitted disease—from himself, Trump has the audience eating from his antiseptic palm. Of the women of the Clinton scandal, he says, "You have some beauties in that deal." Of his competition, Pat Buchanan, he says, "he's obviously been having a love affair with Adolf Hitler." One of Trump's loudest applause lines, which works everywhere he goes, is "I don't drink, I don't smoke, I've never had a cup of coffee." It comes as a surprise, but tea-drinkers may be the soccer moms of the 2000 election.



AP/Wide World Photos

In Trump's dressing room after the show, five reporters and a *60 Minutes* camera crew are chatting with The Donald. Leno stops by, holding a copy of Trump's upcoming campaign manifesto. Unable to obtain a review copy less than a month before publication, I ask Leno to see it. He passes the book, but it will not open. "It's a dummy copy," quips Leno, "[the book] hasn't been written yet." Trump asserts to skeptical reporters that his flirtation with the presidency isn't just a publicity drive for his book. The revenue the book generates, he says, will pay for his "airplane fuel to go back and forth from California." Besides, he repeats several times in the same conversation, he's already had three number-one bestsellers. Likewise, he is "running the biggest real estate empire in the world" and he's "very competent and very rich," though "I don't want to toot my own horn." It's not his way.

Trump invites us back to L'Ermitage for a reception with about 100 Reform party activists who pack The Donald's cavernous Governor's Suite, two floors below the Presidential Suite. He serves them goat cheese on black olive ciabatta and good Merlot, not the boxed Zinfandel they are accustomed to. The California crowd is stylish by Reform standards, but there are still a fair number of double-knit suits and visible nosehairs. As Trump takes the podium, Melania stands at his side, her Piaget watch refracting light as she shifts restlessly on her sinewy, tanned stilts. Trump takes questions from the audience, warning, "the camera is *60 Minutes*, don't worry about them. It's this little program on television . . . so don't worry about embarrassing ourselves with questions."

Trump, it seems, is a bit sensitive to the media perception of the Reform party, which falls somewhere between comic relief and sad joke. This was reinforced yet again when eight Reform party presidential "candidates," including Pat Buchanan, met on December 3 for a debate. At the Portland, Oregon, Marriott, about 100 people assembled to hear the views of several crackpot prospects, while a microphone stand repeatedly toppled over, one candidate's name was misspelled, and Buchanan's speech was overshadowed by a Native American dance ceremony in the neighboring ballroom. A week before this California swing, I asked a Trump aide why Trump wouldn't be attending this debate. "What debate?" he asked, convincingly pretending ignorance.

Holding court in his suite, Trump answers Reformer concerns. He casts aspersions on the WTO and the U.S. trade representative. "Where does she come from?" he asks. "Has *she* made billions of dollars?" He rubs turpentine in the wounds of black-helicopter types, saying that he believes in the United Nations so strongly that "I'm building a 90-story building right next to it." Though some hecklers ding him for dumping on other Reformers, Trump tears into Pat Buchanan and his new ally, the radical Lenora Fulani. "We have the ultra-right and a Com-

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munist, you can have that party," Trump says. When one gentleman asks Trump if he'll support the party platform, Trump says, "Nobody knows what the platform is." Someone brings him a copy. Trump says he'll read it, but leaves it on the podium when the Q&A session ends.

It's a virtuoso performance. Trump has disagreed with, chided, and even insulted his constituency, and yet they mob him afterwards, won over by either his Merlot or his candor. As Melania disappears into a back room to avoid getting pawed by the double-knits, Trump lunges into the throng, shaking hands—shaking hands!—and signing campaign literature. He looks my way, beaming. Holding up a picture of himself, he asks, "Isn't he handsome?"

A few hours after the reception, a small group of reporters are off to The Ivy. The Ivy is one of those insider Hollywood restaurants where out-of-towners come to experience the epicenter of cool, though since we know about it, it's likely on the verge of extinction. We are shunted off to a lonely patio corner with an obstructed view. Trump's fellow *Tonight Show* guest, Michael Bolton, sits at the next table, temporarily unaware of our existence. After about ten minutes, the Trump entourage, having already eaten, emerges from an inner sanctum where they've been chatting up Rod Stewart. Seeing us in the corner, Trump walks over and says to Bolton, in a voice loud enough for the entire restaurant to hear, "Watch out for these guys, they rule the world." Trump then vanishes into his limo, but the very molecular structure of the patio changes around us. Food tastes better. Wine flows freer. Strange women strike up conversations with us from distant tables. Michael Bolton rises to his feet and starts sucking-up profusely to Adam Nagourney of the *New York Times*. We are, thanks to the Donald, what Matty the Squid might call "made men."

Trump lunges into the throng, shaking hands—shaking hands!—and signing campaign literature. Holding up a picture of himself, he asks, "Isn't he handsome?"

Bolton bores us with earnest accounts of how he's campaigning for Hillary Clinton. But he strikes pay dirt when he tells us how, after Trump once broke up with former wife Marla Maples, Bolton began dating her. It made Trump so jealous that he took her back. But then, "when he could have her," says Bolton, "he didn't want her anymore." As his presidential campaign seems to suggest, Trump is most attracted to things he can't have. Just two months after the death of Princess Di, for example, he expressed profound sadness to *Dateline*. "I would have loved to have had a shot to date her," he told Stone Phillips, "because she was an absolutely wonderful woman."

"Do you think you would have had a shot?" asked Phillips. "I think so, yeah," responded The Donald, "I always have a shot." Classy.

The next day, we rise at dawn to follow Trump to the Simon Wiesenthal Center's Museum of Tolerance, which bills itself, in Trumpian fashion, as a "world-class human rights laboratory." Trump says he was asked to come here, though Rabbi Abraham Cooper of the center tells us Trump made the request. Whatever: It's a natural photo-op for Trump, who may wind up running against a man who's having "a love affair with Adolf Hitler." The Donald, Melania, and the media scrum follow Cooper through exhibits like the "Point of View Diner," and a film montage depicting atrocities throughout the world. The Donald gazes intently, brow knitted, his lips fixed in puckered protrusion. In profile, he looks like a distressed mallard.

As we walk through the museum, he and Melania occasionally lock fingers, while Trump tries to impress the Rabbi by dropping the names of Jewish friends. "Do you know Nelson Peltz?" he asks, "Fantastic guy." We walk through the Holocaust section, where there are re-creations of everything from the Warsaw Ghetto to Auschwitz. Throughout the trip, Trump keeps saying things like "Good job, Rabbi" and "Great location," as if he is assessing one of his Atlantic City properties.

At the end of the tour, I approach Roger Stone, who is wearing "Nixon Is the One" cufflinks, to ask if Trump will make news. "Is that what you want?" asks Stone, handing me a press release in which Trump will again denounce Buchanan. Trump gives a modified version of the statement in the museum atrium, praising the center but omitting the Buchanan references. By the end of the Q&A, however, he's again fitted Buchanan in brownshirt and jackboots. After the press conference, I try to talk about the speech with Stone, but his mind is on other things. He's looking me straight in the cravat.

"Your knot needs work," he says.

From the Wiesenthal Center, we board Trump's 727 at LAX for the 15-minute ride to Long Beach, where Trump will make $100,000 for 20 minutes' work addressing 21,000 people at self-help guru Tony Robbins's seminar. In a word, the plane is classy. Everything is fashioned from mahogany and teak. Crystal bar glasses and decanters line the cabinets (though The Donald doesn't drink), and priceless works of art hang throughout the cabin (the art,

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Trump says, is "off the record" for security reasons). With all these mangy journalists in tow, Trump has several mild panic attacks: "Don't put the glass on the table"; "Watch the paintings, fellas." But he quickly settles into boys-club gregariousness, punching reporters in the arm, talking about hot supermodels, and fielding compliments about Melania. "Pretty incredible, right?" he asks. "She's a beauty, and it's not just here," he says, pointing to his face. "It's the inner beauty, too."

I catch up with Trump in his kitchenette as he tears into a bag of Lay's potato chips. Still curious about the Wiesenthal tour, which one could categorize as pretty cynical political theater, I ask if Donald Trump is good for the Jews. "Yes," he says immediately.

"How?" I ask.

"Not now," he says, crunching into a chip, "I gotta think about my f—in' speech."

At the Long Beach Airport, we deplane and board a chartered bus, appropriately titled, "A Touch of Class." We head to Arrowhead Pond arena, home of the Anaheim Mighty Ducks hockey team, which is filled with Tony Robbins seminarians who've spent hundreds of dollars to glean success secrets from celebrity guests like Larry King (*marry eight times, ask softball questions*).

Tony Robbins, remember, was once invited to Camp David to give success advice to President Clinton. Here, on stage, Robbins dons a headset mike and dances like an epileptic to a mega-mix version of "Real Wild One." Middle managers are instructed to knead each other's necks. "It's okay for guys to rub guys!" Robbins exclaims. Backstage, Trump has a case of nerves, skittishly pacing and shaking his legs to the beat. I tell him to picture his audience naked, and he seems to accept my counsel, wiggling his bushy brows as a female Robbins staffer walks by in a tank top that threatens her circulation.

Robbins introduces Trump to a receptive crowd, and Trump enters to two stageside explosions that nearly ignite his hair. Trump is not opposed to the nerf platitudes of self-help gurus; he and first wife, Ivana, were married by Mr. Positive Thinking himself, Norman Vincent Peale. But today Trump offers a different kind of success recipe, one that sounds like a song-of-the-street beatitude uttered by Frank Sinatra and transcribed by Jilly Rizzo. Commandment One: "People tend to be very vicious, as the boxers say, 'Keep the left up.'" Commandment Two: "Get even. When somebody screws you, screw 'em back, but a lot harder." Commandment Three: "Always have a prenup." The crowd is ecstatic. Robbins is embarrassed. "It's not exactly my values," he says offstage. After the Pre-nup Commandment, I watch Melania. She forces a smile. But the lovelight momentarily flickers out in her eyes.

In a VIP tent after his performance, Trump faces a select group of tortellini-eating businessmen who've paid additional sums to ask questions of the celebrities. Ever the charmer, Trump chooses his interrogators by identifying their salient physical characteristics: "the bald guy in the suit" or "the beautiful woman in the semi-blouse." Of a Yorba Linda resident seeking Trump's advice about running for city council, Trump asks, "Are you a Reform candidate?"

"Yes," the man says.

"Lotsa luck," Trump replies.

Another woman asks how she can create capital "when all I have is my knowledge and training." Trump thinks a moment, then says, "Meet a wealthy guy." He distills his political philosophy into a very simple formula: "In business and in life, people want to hear straight talk. We're tired of being bull—ed by these moron politicians." The crowd is nearly speaking in tongues.

After the event, Stone enters our bus: "I'm here, who needs to be spun?" I ask how The Donald expects to sustain support when he so frequently expresses obvious contempt for everyone but himself. "You piss 50 percent of the people off no matter what you say," says Stone. By his reckoning, Trump needs "only" 35-40 percent of the vote in a three-way election. That seems like a lot. Could that many Americans possibly want Donald Trump to be their president? You wouldn't think so. On the other hand, at the Tony Robbins seminar, 21,000 people have just paid $270 apiece to derive wisdom from Billy Blanks, the founder of Tae-Bo.

Before boarding the plane with reporters for a return ride back to Manhattan (the hottest city with the biggest developer), Trump is still discussing the Robbins "love fest" in colorful terms: "Did you see that one woman? She had an amazing body, but a schoolmarm's face." Wisely, he decides to go off the record for the rest of the flight, so we "can relax and have fun."

"Who wants to take up the plane?" he asks, allowing reporters to sit in the cockpit. The in-flight movie choice is *Midnight Express* or *The Godfather*. Trump picks the former, though Matty the Squid looks disappointed. Melania has shed her Blahnik pumps and pads barefoot around the cabin like an exotic cat. "We have pizza," she purrs. For the next six hours, we share locker-room banter that if transcribed could put an end to several careers. Trump's candor makes John McCain look Nixonian by comparison. As the adventure ends, Trump repeatedly taunts reporters, wondering how we'll ever go back to covering Al Gore and flying coach. It seems a sensible question.

Here's hoping The Donald runs. ♦

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Appeasing North Korea

The Clinton administration's policy has strengthened one of the world's most dangerous tyrannies.

By William R. Hawkins

It is always a temptation for a rich and lazy nation,
To puff and look important and to say;
Though we know we should defeat you, we have not the time to meet you.
We will therefore pay you cash to go away.
And that is called paying the Dane-geld;
But we've proved it again and again,
That once you have paid him the Dane-geld
You never get rid of the Dane.

—Rudyard Kipling, "Dane-Geld"

Kipling's verses, written at the dawn of this century about the tribute the Saxons paid to the Danes a millennium ago, capture the conservative view of history as a recurring pattern of problems and competing solutions. The latest manifestation of the Dane-geld folly is the Clinton administration's policy toward North Korea.

Believing that the heavily militarized, Stalinist regime in Pyongyang is simply too dangerous to confront, the administration has chosen instead to pay it tribute: When North Korea challenges with weapons, the United States responds with concessions. This is the gist of the report released on October 12 by the president's North Korea policy coordinator, former defense secretary William Perry. As Perry explained to CNN a few weeks before the report was issued, with provocations by the North challenging the "uneasy deterrence" on the Korean peninsula, it was "necessary to move forward in a more positive way with North Korea. We have proposed a comprehensive move towards normalization with Korea."

The lesson here—bellicosity is rewarded with improved relations—would seem to make the development of weapons of mass destruction an attractive course for despots clinging to power in failed states. As for the idea that the United States should press for political and economic liberalization in North Korea, Perry rejected it. "The policy team believed that the North Korean regime would strongly resist such reform," says the report, "viewing it as indistinguishable from a policy of undermining. . . . A policy of reforming . . . would also take time—more time than it would take [North Korea] to proceed with its weapons and ballistic missiles programs." For the same reasons, U.N. emergency food aid is not used as leverage for the agricultural and economic reforms (notably the shifting of resources from the military industries to civilian development) needed for North Korea to feed itself.

Not surprisingly, the North Koreans have concluded that defiance works. Their delegation arrived at the new round of talks with the United States in Berlin on November 15 with their usual stony faces and militant posture, confident that the threat of force will protect them from international pressure to reform. This sends a message about the usefulness of nuclear weapons that is heard well beyond Korea. It is a louder message by far than the pieties about nonproliferation that Clinton administration officials trot out whenever necessary and convenient.

Just such brave words were heard recently during the debate over the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty. Earlier, they could be found in the Counterproliferation Initiative contained in the 1995 report of the secretary of defense, none other than William Perry. The core purpose of the initiative was deterrence through strength: to retain "the military, political, and economic capacity to retaliate against those who might contemplate the use of [weapons of mass destruction], so that the costs of such use be seen as outweighing the gains." The report cited the experience of Desert Storm, noting that Saddam Hussein had refrained from using his large stock of chemical weapons against the coalition forces. Although the report did not

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elaborate, there were, in fact, two major reasons for Hussein's "restraint": The United States threatened massive—implicitly even nuclear—retaliation for any use of such weapons. And Saddam Hussein feared provoking the coalition to go beyond the liberation of Kuwait and overthrow his regime.

This is precisely the approach the United States should apply to North Korea. Washington should leave no doubt whatever in Pyongyang that any deployment of weapons of mass destruction would be met with superior strength, and that any use of such weapons would bring the regime to a swift end. Since survival is the top priority of the North Korean leaders, that survival should be made dependent on good behavior, not saber-rattling.

The Clinton administration's policy achieves the opposite. As a new assessment of relations with North Korea by House Republicans confirms, Washington has been rewarding Pyongyang's militancy ever since the two nations signed a Framework Agreement in 1994 "freezing" North Korea's nuclear program in exchange for substantial economic assets. The new report, released November 3, is the work of the North Korea Advisory Group, a panel of nine Republican members appointed by speaker Dennis Hastert. Ben Gilman, chairman of the International Relations Committee, headed the group, whose members included the chairmen of Armed Services (Floyd Spence) and Intelligence (Porter Goss). The crux of their findings: that Pyongyang's development of weapons of mass destruction "has advanced considerably over the last five years." In particular, the panel cited evidence that North Korea is still developing nuclear weapons, even though activity was frozen at the Yongbyon and Taechon sites targeted by the 1994 agreement.

Since survival is the top priority of North Korean leaders, that survival should depend on good behavior, not saber-rattling.

According to the advisory group, the goal of nonproliferation has not been achieved. North Korea has had extensive contacts with the nuclear establishments in Pakistan and Russia and has attempted to acquire uranium enrichment technologies from Europe and Japan. As the report states, "This means that the United States cannot discount the possibility that North Korea could produce additional nuclear weapons outside of the constraints imposed by the 1994 Agreed Framework."

Under the Framework Agreement, North Korea is to receive two light-water nuclear reactors, valued at over $4 billion, financed by South Korea, Japan, and the United States. In the meantime, the United States is supplying, free, roughly half of North Korea's oil supplies as compensation for the closing of its Soviet-supplied 25-megawatt reactor at Yongbyon, the source of the country's existing supply of weapons-grade plutonium. The advisory group found, however, that the new reactors will not end Pyongyang's nuclear weapons program in and of themselves. Indeed, they will provide North Korea with enough plutonium to produce 100 bombs a year, should the regime decide to reprocess the material. Thus, the Framework Agreement is not the technological fix the administration has claimed it to be. Though Washington could refuse to supply the new reactors with fuel, other sources of supply might be available. Though Russia and China are generally cited as potential suppliers, global competition in the nuclear industry might open up other, ostensibly commercial, possibilities.

The Framework Agreement covers only nuclear facilities. The advisory group found that Pyongyang "is generally credited with possessing a full range of chemical warfare agents, including nerve, blister, choking, and blood agents. The North Koreans have recently emphasized their work on nerve agents. It is also believed that [they are] interested in developing binary nerve agents." As for biological warfare, Pyongyang's "effort is believed to have focused on the traditional agents: plague, typhoid, cholera, anthrax, smallpox, yellow fever, botulinum toxin, and hemorrhagic fevers." Having learned tactics from the Soviet Union, North Korea has weaponized these chemical and biological agents for use on a variety of systems, from heavy mortars to ballistic missiles.

North Korea's missile program is also not covered by the Framework Agreement. Pyongyang has produced and deployed missiles and has exported them to Iran and Pakistan. Its three-stage Taepo Dong 1 was test-launched in 1998, and it continues to develop the larger and more powerful Taepo Dong 2. Although Pyongyang suspended long-range missile tests in September in exchange for the easing of economic sanctions, the advisory group concludes that, "Unlike five years ago, North Korea can now strike the United States with a missile that could deliver high explosive, chemical, biological, or possibly nuclear weapons." The United States remains vulnerable to this threat because the Clinton administration has refused to move forward with the deployment of a national missile defense system.

Economic sanctions combined with the collapse of

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much of North Korea's unreformed Stalinist economy have greatly undermined Pyongyang's conventional military strength. The lack of hard currency has curtailed the importation of modern weapons, and fuel shortages and starvation (which has claimed an estimated one million lives in a country of 24 million people in the last five years) are taking their toll on military readiness. But maybe not for long. The Clinton administration's lifting of sanctions, allowing investment in North Korea and the opening of the U.S. market for Pyongyang's exports, could enable the regime to reverse this decline.

The advisory group concluded that the aid already given to North Korea has helped the regime to maintain control. "U.S. aid to North Korea has grown from zero to more than $270 million annually, totaling $645 million over the last five years. Based on current trends, that total will likely exceed $1 billion next year," says the advisory group, adding, "This aid frees other resources for North Korea to divert to its weapons of mass destruction and conventional military programs." The group found that the flow of U.S. aid is not well-enough monitored to prevent its being used first and foremost to sustain the regime, its loyalists, and its instruments of tyranny and aggression.

Five years of economic aid has accomplished what appeasement usually does. North Korea "is a greater threat to international stability primarily in Asia and secondarily in the Middle East" than it was in 1994, concludes the advisory group. "Current U.S. policy is not effectively addressing the threat posed by North Korean weapons of mass destruction, missiles and their proliferation, . . . [while] U.S. assistance sustains a repressive and authoritarian regime." In short, appeasement is buying Pyongyang the time it needs to extend the reach of its weapons, until they can threaten the United States itself.

All of which only validates Kipling's final verse:

So when you are requested to pay up or be molested,
You will find it better policy to say:
We never pay any one Dane-geld
No matter how trifling the cost,
For the end of that game is oppression and shame,
And the nation that plays it is lost! ♦

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When All Else Fails:

Controlled Access To Heroin Makes Sense

This June, for the second time in three years, the people of Switzerland voted to make heroin available to addicts who have been unsuccessful in treatment and with methadone.

Why?

An independent review of the Swiss heroin program published by the World Health Organization* found:

- **Participants in the heroin maintenance program reduced criminal activity by over 50%.**
- **The percentage of participants in the heroin maintenance program holding a job rose from 14% to 32%.**
- **The percentage of participants in the heroin maintenance program who were homeless dropped from 12% to 1%.**
- **There were significant drops in the use of illegal drugs reported, including heroin, cocaine, marijuana and benzodiazepines.**
- **There was no diversion of prescribed heroin to the illegal street market.**
- **There were no overdoses from heroin prescribed by the program.**

Less crime, less illegal drugs, improved health, higher employment and less homelessness! Prescription heroin makes sense when abstinence and methadone treatment fail.

Common Sense for Drug Policy, Kevin B. Zeese, President
703-354-5694, 703-354-5695 (fax), info@csdp.org, www.csdp.org

Robert Ali et al, "Report of the External Panel on the Evaluation of the Swiss Scientific Studies of Medically Prescribed Narcotics to Drug Addicts," The World Health Organization, April 1999.

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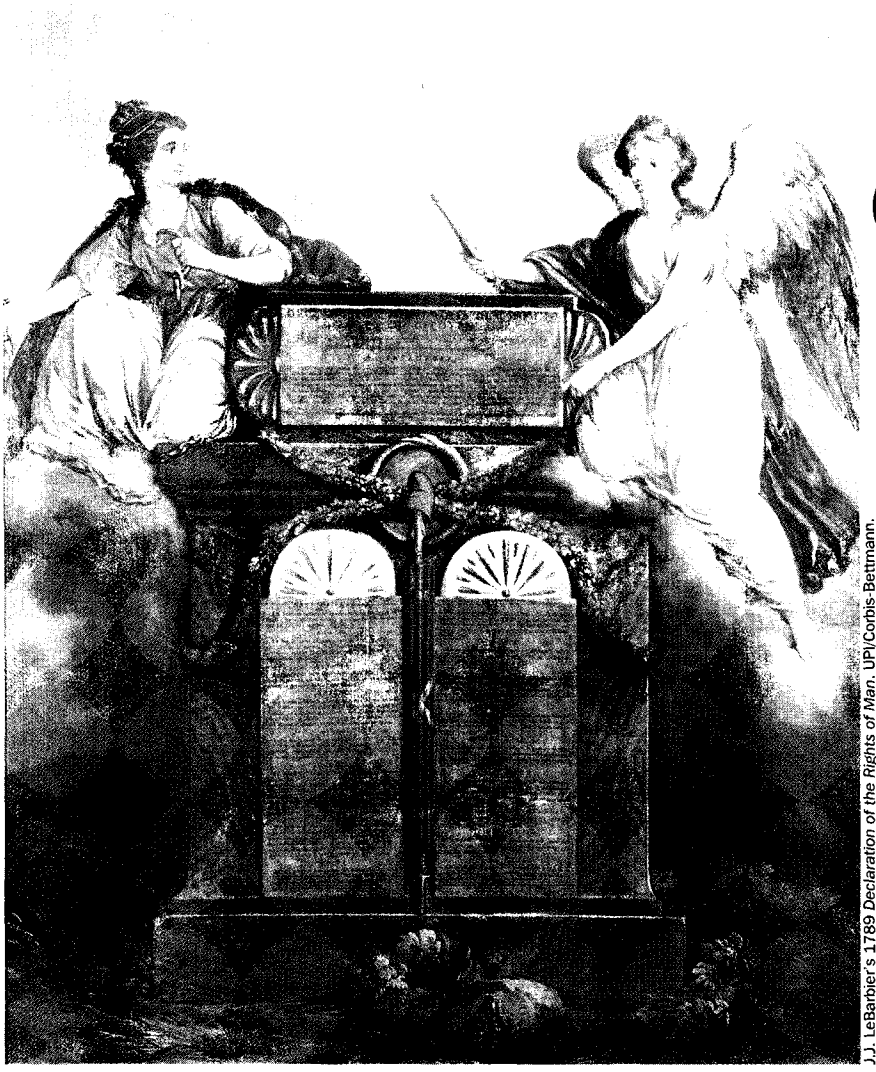
Natural Born Lawyers

Why natural law is staging a comeback

By J. Budziszewski



J.J. LeBarbier's 1789 *Declaration of the Rights of Man*. UPI/Corbis-Bettmann.

It is thought rude these days to say so, but there are some moral truths that we all really know—truths a normal human being is unable not to know. They are a universal possession and an emblem of the rational mind.

This doesn't mean that we know them with unfailing clarity or that we have reasoned out their implications. Nor does it mean that we never pretend not to know them or that we never lose our nerve when told they aren't true. Yet, such as it is, our common moral knowledge is as real as arithmetic and probably just as plain—so plain, in fact, that we appeal to it even to justify our wrongdoing: Rationalization is the homage paid by sin to guilty knowledge.

These basic moral principles, together with their first few rings of implications, are what philosophers refer to when they use the phrase "natural law." The last time natural law theory made a splash in America was shortly after World War II, under the influence of such Continental exiles as Jacques Maritain, Yves Simon, Heinrich Rommen, and Leo Strauss. There followed some dry decades, but now books on natural law are once again pouring from the presses: new ones written, old ones reissued, and yet more about to be released. "Natural Law" appears in the title of at least twenty-six books published in America over the last two years.

To make sense of this deluge—to grasp why it's happening now—it's necessary to begin, not precisely with what we all really know (which is quite a lot), but with what the great majority of human beings in all times and places *admit* that we know (which is rather less). Back in 1931, John M. Cooper offered this summary:

> The peoples of the world, however much they differ as to details of morality, hold universally, or with practical universality, to at least the following basic precepts. Respect the Supreme Being or the benevolent being or beings who take his place. Do not "blaspheme." Care for your children. Malicious murder or maiming, stealing, deliberate slander or "black" lying, when committed against friend or unoffending fellow clansman or tribesman, are reprehensible. Adultery proper is wrong, even though there be exceptional circumstances that permit or enjoin it and even though sexual relations among the unmarried may be viewed leniently. Incest is a heinous offense. This universal moral code agrees rather closely with our own Decalogue taken in a strictly literal sense.

Cooper's reminder was lost at the time among other travelers' tales: Margaret Mead's story of a Pacific free-love paradise among the Samoans, for instance, or Colin Turnbull's account of the conscienceless Ik in Africa. Of course, as it has since been revealed, Mead and Turnbull were wrong: The Samoans turn out to have been fierce defenders of chastity, and the Ik to have had a strong sense of mutual obligation. And, in fact, the discrediting of Mead and Turnbull's sort of anthropology is one cause of the revival of interest in natural law—for part of our common moral sense is the notion that there actually is a common moral sense. Philosophers call it "natural" to convey the idea that it is somehow rooted in the

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way things really are. Chinese wisdom traditions call it the Tao; Indian, the dharma or rita. The Talmud declares that it was given to the "sons" of Noah, which means all of us. St. Paul says that when gentiles do by nature what the law requires, they show that its works are "written on their hearts."

Of course, much of modern philosophy has turned on the attempt to deny any specific content to this common moral knowledge. And the endless hectoring—by utilitarians (who try to ignore everything but pleasure), libertarians (who try to ignore everything but rights), Kantians (who try to ignore everything but the will), and relativists (who try to ignore *everything*)—has had its effect. When, in the 1992 *Planned Parenthood* v. *Casey* decision, the Supreme Court announced a "right to define one's own concept of existence, of meaning, of the universe, and of the mystery of human life," it was widely thought to have at last banished from American jurisprudence any appeal to the idea of natural law.

A little reflection, however, reveals that what the Court was really doing (and this is yet more proof of the fact that we can't succeed, try as we might, at the attempt to ignore our common moral sense) was not rejecting the theory of natural law, but asserting it—in a degenerate and self-annihilating way. But even a self-annihilating theory is still a theory. Your rights are powers to make moral claims upon me, and thus if I want to deny those moral claims (as the Court said I could do with the unborn child's), I must pretend that you are not a human being. We turn out to be following the logic of natural law even while we're trying to escape it; the right to define one's own existence ends up as an effort to define other people's *non*-existence.

Perhaps the best place to start for discovering how we got to this point is Heinrich Rommen's *The Natural Law: A Study in Legal and Social History and Philosophy*, a recently reissued volume from 1936 that deserves to be better known. Rommen would lay the blame for the *Planned Parenthood* v. *Casey* decision on the Enlightenment's concept of natural rights. Even in the late Middle Ages, certain Scholastic thinkers had begun to give natural rights prominence in the theory of natural law. But in Scholasticism, those rights were perceived to be only part of a complete picture of morality. We have rights for the same reason we have duties. We have a natural inclination to use our sexual powers, for example, and this inclination must be good, since everything in nature is good (by Scholastic definition) when it works toward its natural end. The natural end of sex is plainly the making of children and the uniting of spouses. It is proper, then, to recognize in our sexual powers both a right and a duty—the right to marry and the duty to reserve sex for the permanent, potentially procreative union of marriage.

The Natural Law
A Study in Legal and Social History and Philosophy
by Heinrich Albert Rommen
Liberty Fund, 306 pp., $27

In Defense of Natural Law
by Robert P. George
Oxford University Press, 354 pp., $65

Aquinas's Theory of Natural Law
An Analytic Reconstruction
by Anthony J. Lisska
Oxford University Press, 336 pp., $24.95 paper

Natural Law in Judaism
by David Novak
Cambridge University Press, 210 pp., $54.95

A Preserving Grace
Protestants, Catholics, and Natural Law
edited by Michael Cromartie
Eerdmans, 201 pp., $20 paper

Narrative and the Natural Law
An Interpretation of Thomistic Ethics
by Pamela M. Hall
University of Notre Dame Press, 168 pp., $16 paper

Natural Law and Contemporary Public Policy
edited by David F. Forte
Georgetown University Press, 416 pp., $65

Feminist Ethics and Natural Law
The End of the Anathemas
by Christina L.H. Traina
Georgetown University Press, 389 pp., $27.95

Today's rights talk works differently. For various reasons, Enlightenment thinkers lost confidence in the possibility of saying what the total picture is. Little by little, instead of reasoning "Because of this total picture, we have these rights and duties," they came to reason "Because we have these rights, we have the duties we have agreed to in the exercise of our rights." Once philosophical thought moves in this direction, it becomes difficult to say exactly where our rights came from in the first place. One Enlightenment thinker tried to derive rights from "preservation," another from "sociality," another from "happiness," and every other from somewhere else. At least eight new natural law theories were published at every Leipzig booksellers' fair in the early 1780s—all of them detailed and all of them completely different—and within a very short time the very idea of natural law seemed a discredited gimmick for passing off one's personal prejudices as eternal truth.

And yet, though Rommen would argue that we need to return to the place where we got off the track, unlearning the bad habits we picked up in the Enlightenment and going back to the old theory of natural law we somehow forgot, it may be that the Enlightenment didn't get everything wrong. This, at least, is the argument made by Princeton University's Robert George in his new *In Defense of Natural Law*, which is not, in fact, a defense of natural law as such, but a defense of the "new" natural law theory George shares with such modern thinkers as John Finnis and Germain Grisez.

When St. Thomas Aquinas used the phrase "natural law" back in the thirteenth century, he meant that the law is *natural* because it is grounded in the design by which God made the universe. Yes, of course, certain moral truths are self-evident and we can't not know them, but the important thing is that they are self-evident truths *about the order of creation*. That's why St. Thomas doesn't just call our natural inclinations good but defines goodness in terms of inclinations. "Good," he says, "is that which all things seek after."

This is the sort of reasoning that George, Finnis, and Grisez reject. They agree with the Enlightenment rebuke that the old natural law theory commits

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UPI/Corbis-Bettmann.

An 1879 French allegory, La République.

the "naturalist fallacy," which means trying to derive a moral conclusion from a factual premise—in Thomas's case, "X fulfills nature, so X is good." We must rather assert that although some truths are self-evident, they are self-evident for a different reason than St. Thomas thought. It isn't because they are built into nature for the reasoning mind to reflect, but because they are built into the reasoning mind itself. Self-evidence lies not in the way the world is put together, but in the way the mind is put together.

To see what a difference this new sort of reasoning makes, consider an issue in sexual ethics. The old sort of natural lawyer reflects that it is wrong to use the sexual powers in a way which thwarts their built-in working—as, for instance, in the use of artificial contraception, which fights the design of the sexual powers instead of cooperating with it. The new natural lawyers, instead of saying that it is wrong to act against the design of the sexual powers, argue that it is wrong to act directly against "the basic good of life," something condoms plainly do. Different argument, same conclusion? Maybe not. Under the old theory it is easy to see a difference between condoms and the "rhythm method" of natural family planning, for periodic abstinence doesn't make a fertile act infertile, while a barrier does. Under the new theory it is hard to see a difference, for both condoms and periodic abstinence are intended to prevent procreation.

And the new natural law theory proposes so many things one must not act directly against. The "basic goods" include not only life, but even such things as "skillful play," all inviolable (in the sense that it is wrong to act against them) and incommensurable (in the sense that it is impossible to call one better than another). R.G. Wright objects that, under this scheme, I cannot even justify taking off from my golf game to rescue a drowning child. Not only is life no better than play, but I must not act against play directly. Now George has an answer, which on logical grounds cannot be faulted. Of course I should save the child, he says, for the fact that life is no better than play doesn't mean I have no other considerations to bring to bear; there is always the Golden Rule. And besides, I am not acting directly against the good of play, because ruining the game was not my intention but only a result—a "double effect," to use the technical term—of saving the child.

It's a little troubling that George's defense of the Finnis-Grisez line of natural law reasoning has to bring in the complex and difficult doctrine of double effect to explain why I should lay down my golf clubs to save a drowning child—as though the decision were as difficult as figuring out whether to bomb a terrorist rocket launcher on the roof of an orphanage. The theory of natural law, after all, is supposed to explain the philosophical possibility for what everyone already knows—and we probably ought to be suspicious of theories that turn easy cases into hard ones, even when it settles them correctly.

The old natural law didn't present us with this difficulty. Although it did hold a few things inviolable, it didn't list so many, and it didn't refuse to call any basic good better than any other. So Anthony J. Lisska argues in *Aquinas's Theory of Natural Law*. In Lisska's view, there was no need to develop a "new" natural law theory, because the worry about "naturalist fallacies" in the old one was misplaced. Lisska doesn't deny that such a fallacy exists. Like other contemporary defenders of St. Thomas—Ralph McInerny, Henry Veatch, Russell Hittinger—he just denies that the old theory commits it: Yes, it's faulty reasoning to derive a normative moral conclusion from a merely factual premise; but what if the "facts" aren't "mere"—what if the starting point is normative already? What if we aren't pasting values into the order of creation, but eliciting from that order the values that are already there?

Of course, making good on this claim requires an understanding of nature in which the properties of things are not "simple" but "dispositional"—which is a technical way of saying that you have to view each thing in the universe as though it were an arrow directed naturally to a goal. That's what St. Thomas thought. The nature of a thing, he said, is "a purpose, implanted by the Divine Art, that it be moved to a determinate end." And, regardless of philosophy, it's the way we all naturally tend to think of things. An acorn is not essentially something small with a point at one end and a cap at the

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other; it's something that wants to be an oak. A boy is not essentially something with baggy pants and a foul mouth; he's something that wants to be a man.

In this way of thinking, everything in creation is a wannabe. You just have to recognize what it naturally wants to be, and natural law turns out to be the technical spec sheet, the guide for getting there. For the acorn, this isn't law in the strictest sense, for law must be addressed to an intelligent being capable of choice and the acorn can't be in conflict with itself. But a boy can—and that's why we need philosophy to formulate the natural law.

And yet, according to the old theory of natural law, the human arrow is unlike all others because it is directed to a goal its natural powers cannot reach. We have one natural longing that nature cannot satisfy. God is not only the author of human nature but the direction in which it faces and the power on which it depends, its greatest good. That boy on the corner is something that wants to be a man, but a man is something that wants, on top of all its other difficulties of fulfillment, to be in friendship with God. And that, short of a *super*natural grace, is impossible—which creates a massive problem. God, in such religions as Judaism, Christianity, and Islam, has offered direct revelation concerning this supernatural need of human beings. Suddenly we appear to have two laws, the natural and the divine. Suddenly, the God who implanted law in nature announces another law in words.

Embarrassed, some natural lawyers rush to assure us that the natural law would make perfect sense even if there were no God at all—forgetting that if there were no God there would be no nature either. On the other hand, some believers say that since we have the Bible to tell us what to do, we don't need a natural law. In fact, maybe there isn't any. The Old Testament doesn't even mention "nature." The New Testament does, but says there is something wrong with it.

This is the problem taken up in *A Preserving Grace: Protestants, Catholics, and Natural Law*, edited by Michael Cromartie, the elegant *Natural Law in Judaism*, by David Novak, and the interesting but rather more specialized *Narrative and the Natural Law: An Interpretation of Thomistic Ethics*, by Pamela Hall. The Rabbinic Jews and Protestant Christians who are skeptical about natural law ought to pick up these books, for present in all three of them is an awareness of the fact that the Bible does not claim that there is no knowledge of God and His moral requirements outside Holy Writ. What the Bible claims is rather that there is no knowledge of salvation outside God's word, which is a very different thing. Indeed, at least five modes of extra-biblical knowledge of right and wrong and God are acknowledged in the Bible: the witnesses of conscience, of God's handiwork, of Godward longings, of our inbuilt design, and of the "harvest," i.e. the consequences of our deeds.

The more headway natural law theory makes, the harder every ideologue will work to reinterpret and distort it.

Theologians typically distinguish "general revelation," corresponding to natural law, which God gives to all human beings through His creation, and "special revelation," corresponding to divine law, which He gives to believers through His word. Novak argues that natural law is not only compatible with divine law but presupposed by it; if you didn't have the general revelation, you wouldn't be able to understand the special. Hall grasps that the relationship also works in the other direction, for the salvation story puts natural law in its context: If you didn't have the special revelation, then you would still have the general, but it would be a message of futility. Indeed, by itself, natural law is not good news (the literal meaning of the word "gospel"), but bad news—a standard which in this fallen world we cannot keep, which serves primarily to allow us to measure our failures.

Comparison of the Novak and Cromartie books suggests an interesting parallel between the situations of natural law in Judaism and in Christianity. Each tradition contains some who wish to slight the natural law and some who wish to slight the divine law—some who snub the general revelation, and others who snub the special. In Novak's punning way of putting it, there are people who reduce reason to revelation, and people who reduce revelation to reason. Just as he seeks a middle path for Jews, the contributions edited by Cromartie seek a middle path for Christians. Cromartie's book is an anthology, the record of a conference. That usually spells dull reading, but in this case the prophecy is wrong. The great hit of the volume is Susan Schreiner's piece on John Calvin, an eye-opener because Calvin thought much more highly of natural law than do many who fly his flag today. Also appealing is the deftly edited audience discussion, in which the reader cannot help noticing the way that some of the Protestants sound like Roman Catholics, and some of the Catholics like Evangelical Protestants.

For those more interested in knowing what practical difference natural law makes in law and politics, the volume to get is *Natural Law and Contemporary Public Policy*, edited by David Forte. Proponents of several theories of natural law are included, and it provides a good sampling of the issues: privacy, homosexuality, bioethics, education, and half a dozen more.

Consider just Christopher Wolfe's piece on judicial review. Despite their moral traditionalism, some conservatives are wary of the claim that there is a natural law higher than written law. Aren't activist judges too full of themselves already? Do they really need another excuse to throw their weight around? What these conservatives forget to ask is how these judges got that way. Even when they don't know it, our

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activist judges are already working with a theory of natural law—it's just a bad one. And the antidote isn't no theory, but a better one. Wolfe points out that the core principles of the natural law are very general, and their application to the detailed circumstances of actual communities is hard work. Prudence suggests a division of labor. Let legislators use natural law to make the statutes, for otherwise they will be unjust. Let judges use natural law to understand the statutes, for otherwise they will be opaque. No guideline is immune from abuse, but so far as it goes, Wolfe's proposal makes good sense.

And yet, perhaps those conservatives are not entirely wrong to be wary of the effect of recent efforts of natural law theory on political and judicial decisions. The more headway the theory makes, the harder every ideologue will work to reinterpret it, to distort it, to turn it to advantage. One theorist will try to use it to justify same-sex mating. Another to explain euthanasia and abortion. A third to argue that "natural law's concrete conclusions are dynamic and humanly generated to the same degree that humanity itself is"—which is to say that the unnatural is natural, if we say so. If you want to see how this sort of thing might be done, you might look at Christina Traina's *Feminist Ethics and Natural Law*.

But none of these misuses invalidates natural law theory; in fact, they mostly serve to help prove its validity, for a lie travels furthest on the back of truth. We're seeing in America in recent years a rebirth of interest in natural law, partly because of the failure of Enlightenment ethics to propose a successful substitute, partly because of the intellectual discrediting of 1950s-style anthropological relativism, and partly because Americans may finally be remembering that there really are, after all is said and done to deny them, some moral truths that we know—truths a normal human being is unable not to know. But as one reads one's way through recent judicial decisions, one comes upon what may be the best reason for the revival of interest: We need the authentic natural law to save us from its impersonators. ♦

McCarthy's Historian

Tailgunner Joe, retried at the Bar of History.

BY ROBERT D. NOVAK

Nearly half a century after his death, the wraith of Joe McCarthy has returned to arouse fear and loathing in the hearts of American liberals. Aided immeasurably by his own self-destructiveness, they long ago buried him and reduced his legacy to a dictionary definition of unfairness. Even conservatives routinely apply the label of McCarthyism to the most despicable behavior of their opponents. But now the junior senator from Wisconsin is rising Rasputin-like from his ideological grave.

Joseph McCarthy
Reexamining the Life and Legacy of America's Most Hated Senator
by Arthur Herman
Free Press, 403 pp., $26

It started with the release of the Venona decryptions last year, leading left-wing journalist Nicholas von Hoffman to muse that maybe McCarthy was right after all about Communist agents in the U.S. government. Next came *The Redhunter*, a William F. Buckley Jr. novel depicting McCarthy as a sympathetic and tragic though often reprehensible advocate of a great cause. But now comes a little-known academic with a forceful vindication of McCarthyism, if not McCarthy: *Joseph McCarthy: Reexamining the Life and Legacy of America's Most Hated Senator*, by Arthur Herman.

In the November 28 *New York Times* Sunday magazine, leftist journalist Jacob Weisberg contended that Arthur Herman, adjunct professor of history at George Mason University, "sets out to rehabilitate" McCarthy. In fact, Herman is attempting much less and yet much more. No one can condone McCarthy's behavior, and Herman doesn't try. His audacious mission is rather to strip away two generations of propaganda and myth-making that vilified McCarthy and elevated the likes of Dean Acheson to such Olympian heights that current Republican presidential candidates compete in celebrating his memory. This biographer contends that McCarthy, the loser in the high-stakes political game, was right and Acheson, the winner, was wrong.

That does not require cleansing of McCarthy's personal reputation. Herman acknowledges the senator's "lies or distortions." He depicts FBI director J. Edgar Hoover as contemptuous of McCarthy's exaggeration of the pro-Communist Owen Lattimore as the leading Soviet spy in America. "Those who knew McCarthy," Herman writes, "were constantly discovering to their astonishment how little McCarthy knew about theory or practice of Communism itself." Indeed, by the time he exploded on the national scene with his 1950 speech in Wheeling, West Virginia, claiming proof of Communists in the State Department, McCarthy "had largely lost the confidence of even his fellow party members." After Wheeling, McCarthy "did distort" the lists of alleged subversives at State, says Herman. "When cornered or challenged, he preferred to exaggerate—even lie—about what cards he actually had in his hand. During his short and meteoric career as the Senate's leading red-baiter, McCarthy learned to bluff his way through in hopes that subsequent research would confirm the bulk of it."

Robert D. Novak is a nationally syndicated columnist for the Chicago Sun-Times *and a CNN commentator. His latest book,* Completing the Revolution, *will be published in January.*

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All this fits the old stereotype of McCarthyism. But Herman breaks new ground in arguing forcefully that McCarthy did uncover State Department officials who were "really too inclined to accept Communism's premises to resist its conclusions." A prime example is Philip C. Jessup, an establishment expert on international law who was given the rank of ambassador-at-large in 1949 by Acheson. Jessup is remembered as one of the early victims of McCarthyism, but Herman contends that this top Acheson adviser "could *with the best intentions* direct policy towards ends that actually promoted Communist rather than American interests."

The issue is broader than Herman's characterization of Jessup as a "well-meaning dupe." He adds: "At the core of the Jessup case was the clash between liberals and conservatives over how to conduct the Cold War." Herman sides with McCarthy and his Senate Republican allies William Jenner of Indiana and Kenneth Wherry of Nebraska against such elegant foreign service professionals as George Kennan and Charles Bohlen. The senators, consigned to oblivion in the Cold War's history as neanderthals, "instinctively grasped that trying to deal with the Soviets as a conventional power, in conventional geopolitical terms, would be to lose the larger struggle."

Herman describes the conventional picture—of the Truman administration's "Wise Men," headed by Acheson and General George Marshall, leading the nation through the deadly confrontation with Moscow—as constituting "one of the most persistent myths of the McCarthy era." Defense Secretary James Forrestal was alone in Truman's team in appreciating that "bombers and tanks, and even the atomic bomb, were of no real safeguard against a Marxist ideology."

Nothing has exposed McCarthy to more abuse over the years than his attack on Marshall, who held the State and later the Defense portfolio under Truman. While deified by the establishment as the ideal public servant, Marshall is described by Herman as a dupe of Chou En-Lai and the man who more than anybody else can be said to have "lost China." McCarthy's claim, embodied in his notorious Senate speech attacking Marshall, that the general actually desired the Communist takeover of China, is properly dismissed by Herman as "fallacious." But he adds: "McCarthy in his own unreasonable way had raised a reasonable issue. To what extent had a floundering New Deal establishment, including men like Marshall, helped the Soviet Union become a superpower by their own poorly considered actions?"

Herman's comparison: "He [Joe McCarthy] was working class, while they [the Wise Men] were varsity class. He was hairy, loud and sweaty; they were cool, clean and antiseptic. Acheson reviled him as 'the gauleiter and leader of the mob.'" Nevertheless, at his peak, McCarthy represented millions of ordinary Americans. Their votes, Herman argues, enabled Dwight D. Eisenhower to become the first Republican president in twenty years.

But once Eisenhower was in office, his non-ideological approach to the Soviet Union was an extension of Truman's. The new Republican president's enmity doomed McCarthy, who was burdened by his own and his new aide Roy Cohn's calamitous mistakes. As he faced political destruction and approached death, McCarthy "realized that the anti-Communist cause was fading away, forever tainted with the label of 'McCarthyism,' and that liberalism of the soft, yielding sort he despised was gaining ground." Herman adds: "McCarthy's disgrace had completely vindicated men like Acheson, Marshall, and Jessup in the eyes of the media and opinion makers."

This is strong medicine, defying the bipartisan conventional wisdom. Herman's condemnation of the Wise Men perfectly fits Whittaker Chambers's analysis (in his 1952 autobiography *Witness*) of the failed Truman approach to Soviet communism. Chambers broke with McCarthy when the senator, typically, misrepresented Chambers's position on Chip Bohlen. In essence, however, Chambers and McCarthy were allies, supported by their fellow citizens, in a cause smothered by the establishment until Ronald Reagan as president inveighed against the Evil Empire. This is McCarthy's legacy, asserted now after all these years. ♦

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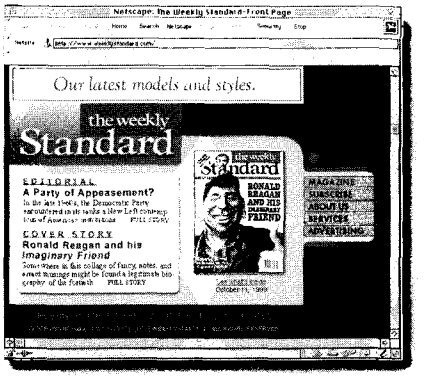

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Warner Bros.

King of the Hill

Stephen King is more serious than you think—and more conservative, too. BY JONATHAN V. LAST

There are conservatives, mostly among the followers of Russell Kirk, who hold a special place in their hearts for the old pulp fiction of Ray Bradbury. And there are others, mostly libertarians, who hold a special place in their hearts for the old pulp fiction of Robert Heinlein. But they may all wish to reconsider, for what's become apparent in recent years is that the single most popular pulp writer of the twentieth century is also the most conservative. And his name is Stephen King. The champion of horror fiction is proving with his latest efforts to be able both to express a surprising level of moral sophistication and—in a much harder trick—to bring his enormous audience along with him as he rises from low-brow pulp to solid middlebrow fiction.

Jonathan V. Last is a reporter at THE WEEKLY STANDARD.

King is back in the news this week, thanks to the just-released movie version of his 1996 serial novel *The Green Mile*, directed by Frank Darabont. "Darabont has the world's smallest cinematic specialty," says King: "Stephen King prison movies." And he's right. The forty-year-old Darabont has directed just three films: a thirty-two minute short based on King's short story *The Woman in the Room*, and two full-length features, the 1994 *Shawshank Redemption* and *The Green Mile*, both screen adaptations of jail-themed King books.

More than any other of the directors who've created the thirty-five King stories now on film, Darabont brings both seriousness and a light touch. Based on a six-part novel, *The Green Mile* tells the story of Paul Edgecomb (played by Tom Hanks), a death-row prison guard in 1932 Louisiana. A large black man named John Coffey (Michael Clarke Duncan) comes under his care, convicted of raping and murdering two young girls. Coffey, however, has mystical powers of healing, and the film tells the moral struggle of a prison guard who must, to perform his duty, put to death a man he gradually comes to believe is innocent. *The Green Mile* is sure-fire Oscar material, but the real revelation in the film is the growing power and confidence of the author himself.

Born in 1947 in Portland, Maine, King grew up poor, the younger of two children. His parents, Donald and Ruth Pillsbury King, were Down-East Yankees to the core (his maternal grandfather had been Winslow Homer's handyman), but when King was two, his father left and his mother took a variety of jobs to keep the family solvent.

Mercifully, King himself rejects the pop psychology that would look to the traumas of those days for the explanation of his adult writing. He attributes his infatuation with the macabre to his discovery, while rooting through his aunt's attic, of a trove of pulp books when he was twelve: Frank Belknap Long, Zelia Bishop, A. Merritt, and, most important, H.P. Lovecraft's *The Lurking Fear and Other Stories*. He was instantly hooked and began writing his own pulp fiction, diligently submitting short stories to magazines.

After winning a scholarship to the University of Maine, King continued writing feverishly, finishing his first stab at a novel before his freshman year began. (It went unpublished until 1977.) It was there at school he met Tabitha Spruce, whom he married in 1971. With college finished, King embarked on life as a struggling writer, working at a laundry during the day, typing away at short stories during the night. At one point he took a job teaching high school English.

Gradually, however, his stories began appearing in men's magazines. And then, in 1973, he wrote a short novel called *Carrie* and showed it to an editor. He was never a struggling writer again. *Carrie* became a bestselling horror franchise: hardcover and paperback books, a

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Columbia Pictures. Below: Dutton.

Morgan Freeman and Tim Robbins in The Shawshank Redemption. *Below: "Richard Bachman."*

movie and sequel, and even a short-lived Broadway musical. Since *Carrie*, King has published more than forty books in thirty-three languages, selling over three hundred million copies.

King may be the richest writer in American history, but unlike most contemporary wealthy authors, he has been generous with his money. In 1998 he recounted to the *New Yorker* the day he sold the rights to *Carrie*:

> Ruth King was working at Pineland Training Center, a home for the mentally retarded. "She served meals, cleaned up s—, wore a green uniform," King said. "One day I went to Pineland to tell her I'd sold this book. She was pulling a truck of dishes. She looked so strung out. She'd lost forty pounds and was dying of cancer but it hadn't even been diagnosed. I looked at her and said, 'Mom, you're done.' And she was. That was her last day working."

After she died, King built the Ruth King Theatre at the school his sons attended.

His philanthropy has been widespread. He built the Shawn T. Mansfield Baseball Complex in Bangor in memory of the son of one of his friends, and recently bequeathed $4 million to the University of Maine, where he sometimes lectures. He subsidizes the National Poetry Foundation, and he is a champion of other writers, trying to give recognition to men such as Thomas Williams, Don Robertson, David Goodis, and Jack Ketchum, whom he calls "American craftsmen who've been overlooked."

All of this makes sense after one reads his books. While his popularity suggests comparison to such writers as Tom Clancy, John Grisham, or Michael Crichton, his prose is more on the level of Elmore Leonard or Cormac McCarthy—and that, despite his staggering level of production. He typically writes a novel a year, and early in his career, wrote so much that he published some under the penname "Richard Bachman" to avoid saturating the market. In 1996 alone, he brought out the six parts of *The Green Mile* in addition to a pair of interlacing novels, *Desperation* and the Bachman-penned *The Regulators*. In one week, King was first, fourth, tenth, twelfth, fourteenth, and fifteenth on the *New York Times* paperback bestseller list.

In all this writing, King has demonstrated his commercial craftsmanship. When he submitted his 1,200-page manuscript for *The Stand* in 1978, his editors told him that he needed to trim 400 pages so the printing costs could be kept in line with the book's $12.95 cover price. Without throwing a tantrum or campaigning for his "artistic rights," King made the cuts. "Writers are made, not born or created out of dreams or childhood trauma," he declared in *Danse Macabre*, his non-fiction study of the horror genre. "Of course there has to be some talent involved, but talent is a dreadfully cheap commodity, cheaper than table salt. What separates the talented individual from the successful one is a lot of hard work and study; a constant process of honing."

But he has also done the hardest thing of all for an enormously popular and highly rewarded author: He has improved himself, and his audience with him. The earliest King books are good, juicy, satisfying pulp, but nothing more. *Carrie*, *The Shining*, *Firestarter*, *Cujo*, all share an urgency to shock. From the pig's blood at Carrie's prom to Cujo's attack on young Tad, there is a reliance on the lesser angels of his audience's nature, as King himself now seems to realize. "Mostly I cringe," he says about his early books. "I really cringe. I think, boy, this is raw."

So he strove for better. His prose, never immortal, got good enough that you rarely noticed it. Then, in a conscious way, he began to raise the level of his tales. *Misery*, *Needful Things*, *Bag of Bones*, and *The Green Mile* all carry firm moral underpinnings, and his non-horror short stories, such as *Rita Hayworth and the Shawshank Redemption* and *The Body* (later made into the movie *Stand By Me*) showed a growing sense of humanity.

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Warner Bros.

David Morse, Michael Clarke Duncan, and Tom Hanks in The Green Mile.

Suddenly his legions of readers found themselves reading passable fiction instead of *Weird Tales* schlock.

The Stand, which remains by far King's most popular book, is also his most explicit morality play. In *The Stand* a minor mishap results in a government-engineered plague. The plague virus, known as "Captain Trips," kills all but a handful of people, and the survivors assemble into two camps, one led by Randall Flagg, "the devil's imp," and the other led by an elderly black woman named Mother Abigail who is expressly identified as an agent of Christ. Following God's orders relayed through Mother Abigail, four members of her camp make a pilgrimage to Flagg's base of operations (in Las Vegas, of course) to take their stand against evil. When they arrive to confront Flagg, the hand of God reaches down and smites the devil.

King's novel is riddled with religious references—and not the feel-good stuff either. *The Stand* concerns tests of faith and crucifixions and sins of pride. It even showcases the most daring of contemporary views: a small brief against abortion. "The horror story most generally not only stands four-square for the Ten Commandments, it blows them up to tabloid size," King wrote in *Danse Macabre*.

It may be precisely because he comes out of a pulp tradition—with its cardboard figures representing good and evil—that King understands what his contemporaries seem to have forgotten: the necessity of a moral framework in successful middlebrow fiction. "The horror story," King says, "beneath its fangs and fright wig, is really as conservative as an Illinois Republican in a three-piece pinstriped suit; its main purpose is to reaffirm the virtues of the norm by showing us what awful things happen to people who venture into taboo lands."

But for all his understanding of the necessity for moral structure, King does fall prey to one thoroughly modern sensibility: the notion that true moral wisdom can be found only in the hearts of children. Adding together the Victorians' belief in the sexual purity of children, the American Transcendentalists' Romantic belief in innocence as the highest moral condition, and modern pop psychologists' belief in indulgence, the first wave of Baby Boomers pioneered the idea that children are morally superior to their parents. They firmly believed that good parenting meant allowing their children to express themselves without being tainted by adult constructs, all of which were symptomatic of some fall from grace.

And secretly King believes this too. "Children see everything, consider everything; the typical expression of a baby which is full, dry, and awake is a wide-eyed goggle at everything," he writes. About *The Stand*, he says, "I was able to envision a world in which all the nuclear stockpiles would simply rust away and some kind of normal moral, political, and ecological balance would return to the mad universe we call home." But then he realized "that the survivors would be very likely to first take up all the old quarrels and then all the old weapons."

The only truly pure characters in King's work are children or adults who act like children. At the end of *The Green Mile*, John Coffey, who is slow to the point that he's considered daft and is so afraid of the dark that he asks the prison guards to leave a light on at night, is put to death by a guard who believes that Coffey is innocent. The guard, Paul Edgecomb, is sympathetic in every way, a kind man who understands his stern duties. Yet because he is part of the adult world, working for "the system," King visits a horrible fate upon him at the film's end.

At last, the component missing from King's view of the world is what the French philosopher Paul Ricoeur calls "second innocence"—an awareness that the highest moral condition is not the retreat into the first innocence of childhood but an advance through adult guilts into a new and grownup form of moral life.

But if King's moral sophistication isn't yet whole, so be it. By elevating his pulp and pulling his readers along with him, he's done the broader culture a service. He's brought his thinking and writing a long way from *Carrie* to *The Green Mile*. Maybe he'll go even further. At his present pace, he has another forty or fifty books in which to try. ♦

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"Nine selective institutions have agreed to admit a total of 100 students next year who score well on a new test that involves Lego blocks and in-depth interviews."
—*The Chronicle of Higher Education*, December 3, 1999

Parody

Institute For Advanced Legological Research

Lab Notes
Prof. A. Einstein
Chuck E. Cheese Professor of Legodynamics

October 19, 1998: A day both thrilling and daunting. The Lego blocks arrived this morning from the Bohr Institute in Copenhagen. There is no greater challenge in all of science than stacking Lego. Da Vinci devised plans for the legendary Four-Stack, but lost them in a tub of pesto. Understanding Lego properties will be harder than I imagined. There are strange bumps on top of them. I hope this won't be a repeat of the Lincoln Logs fiasco. Sinking feeling in my stomach.

December 19, 1998: Days without sleep. My room is drafty and damp. No interest in food. Gravitational pull of Lego blocks too weak. They won't stick together when I put them side by side. To cheer myself up, I waste an egg of Silly Putty trying to copy the funny pages. But all the letters are backwards. How I long for the days exploring theory of relativity.

January 23, 1999: Weeks of work wasted! Lab assistant left Lego in E-Z Bake Oven overnight. If the lightbulb hadn't burned out, there would have been a conflagration! In any case, blocks melted. Meanwhile word comes that at Penn State, Schugens and his team have completed a game of Candyland. Kiss my Nobel goodbye.

March 7, 1999: Burnout. Have spent the winter reading "Goodnight Moon." After six weeks, I'm halfway done. Eliot's criticism misguided. Cow jumping over moon, not bowlful of mush, serves as symbol of human condition.

August 11, 1999: Eureka! Blocks do not stack side by side. They go back to back. The indented holes on the bottom create a suction effect, bonding them together. I hope this works.

November 9, 1999: Defeat. I am utterly unable to assemble Lego. We must scour the country searching for the most brilliant Legologists. We must conduct tests on our top high-school seniors. Admit only the most promising Lego stackers. Humankind cannot go on with so much Lego unstacked. We must pay any price, bear any burden! By the time this decade is out, we will have placed a Lego block on top of another—or at least one of those big Duplo ones, which are easier for child-sized fingers.

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Recapitalizing Public Education

Paul Hill is a research professor at the Center on Reinventing Public Education, University of Washington; distinguished visiting fellow, Hoover Institution; and member, Hoover's Koret Task Force on K–12 Education.

As the political struggles rage over charters, vouchers, and union power, important new intellectual and financial resources are flowing into education. New people are learning how to teach, start, and run schools, incorporate technology, and use cultural resources in ways that the government-run system of schools has ignored. K–12 education is being recapitalized, and the change is unstoppable because it is based on individual choices and private initiative.

Up until five years ago, the government-run school system had become a world unto itself, employing teachers and principals who with rare exceptions had never had any other job and were insulated from the mainstream economy. Educators feared being tainted by contacts with business and churches. Schools would accept money for after-school tutoring programs, "enrichment" experiences for students, but they kept foundations and other organizations at arm's length from the schools' core teaching activities.

The result was an intellectually impoverished government school system, even in cities that were rich with educated people, universities, museums, high-technology companies, great orchestras, and immense private wealth. These assets were considered irrelevant; only the government school system could provide public education. The government-run schools were also hamstrung by teacher certification rules and closed shops that excluded highly qualified people and protected incumbents whatever their level of performance.

The recapitalization of American education is changing all this. More than 500,000 educated home school parents are learning to teach, and many want to continue even when their own children move on. Charter schools are employing tens of thousands of people who would not have been allowed to lead or teach in conventional public schools, and thousands of midcareer professionals are becoming teachers and helping to fill a giant math and science skills deficit.

Powerhouse private institutions are entering education. Hundreds of businesses and philanthropies are investing money and learning how to start and manage charter and voucher-funded schools. Edison, New American Schools, and the California-based New Schools Venture Fund are examples of private investments that create new ways of running schools and educating children. More than fifteen thousand people, mostly from business and the professions, are serving on the charter school boards, learning what it takes to make a school work for kids. Black churches are imitating the Catholics in creating schools for all children, not just for believers.

Intellectual and financial resources that were once sealed off from K–12 education are now flowing in. Although some government school systems try to remain aloof, they cannot resist the people, ideas, and money that are creating new schools, strengthening existing ones, giving parents choices, and making a difference for children.

Laws and policies must and will change, so that many organizations can run public schools, families can have choices, and schools can compete for students and teachers. Events have gotten ahead of politics. Through private initiative on behalf of children, the intellectual resources of entire communities are becoming available for the education of children, especially the poor. That, not bureaucratic control, is the defining feature of public education.

— Paul Hill

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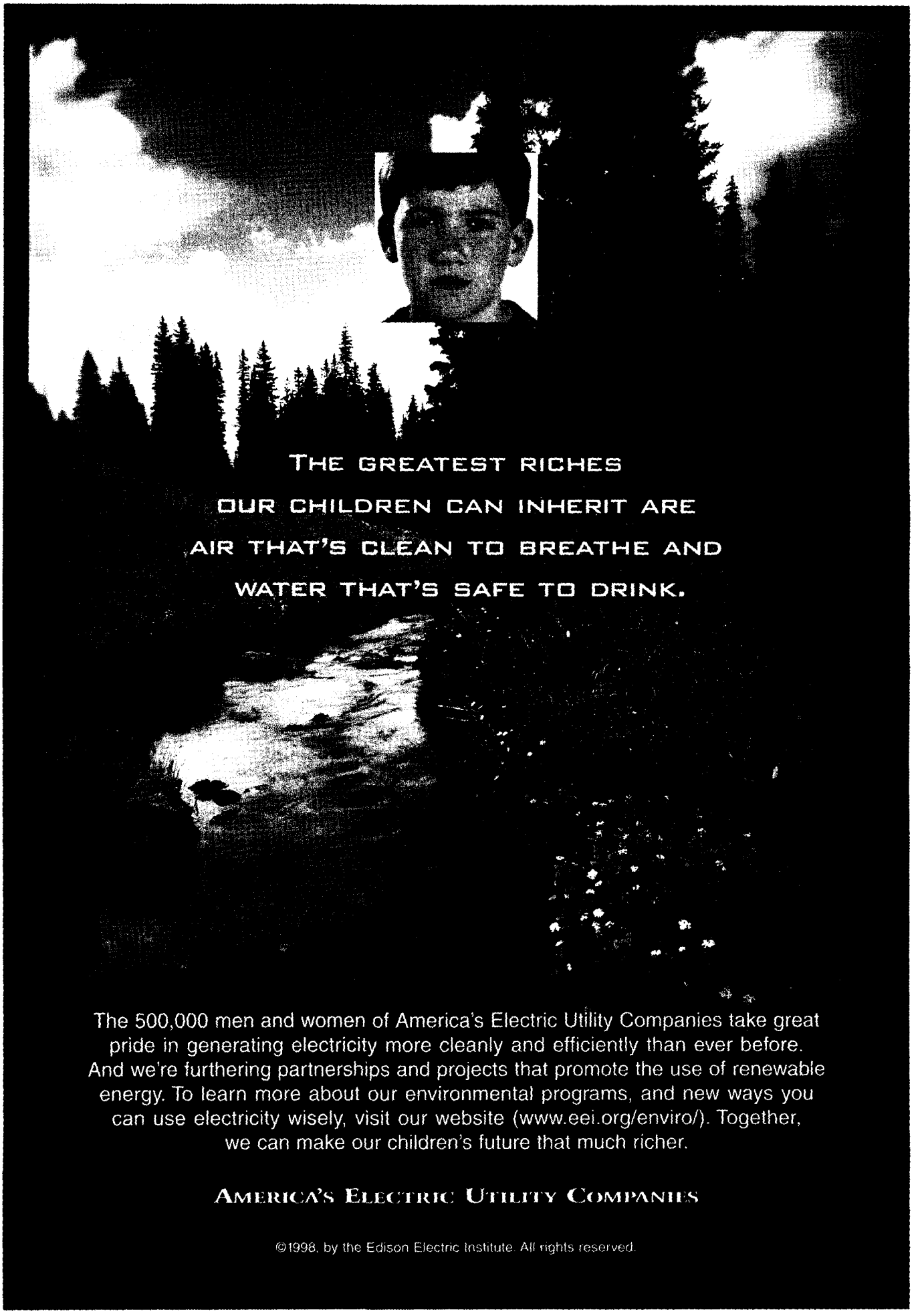

The 500,000 men and women of America's Electric Utility Companies take great pride in generating electricity more cleanly and efficiently than ever before. And we're furthering partnerships and projects that promote the use of renewable energy. To learn more about our environmental programs, and new ways you can use electricity wisely, visit our website (www.eei.org/enviro/). Together, we can make our children's future that much richer.

AMERICA'S ELECTRIC UTILITY COMPANIES

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